PLAY METER magazine

[redacted] HOT ON THE STREETS

VOLUME 16, No. 3 FOR THE COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY February 1990

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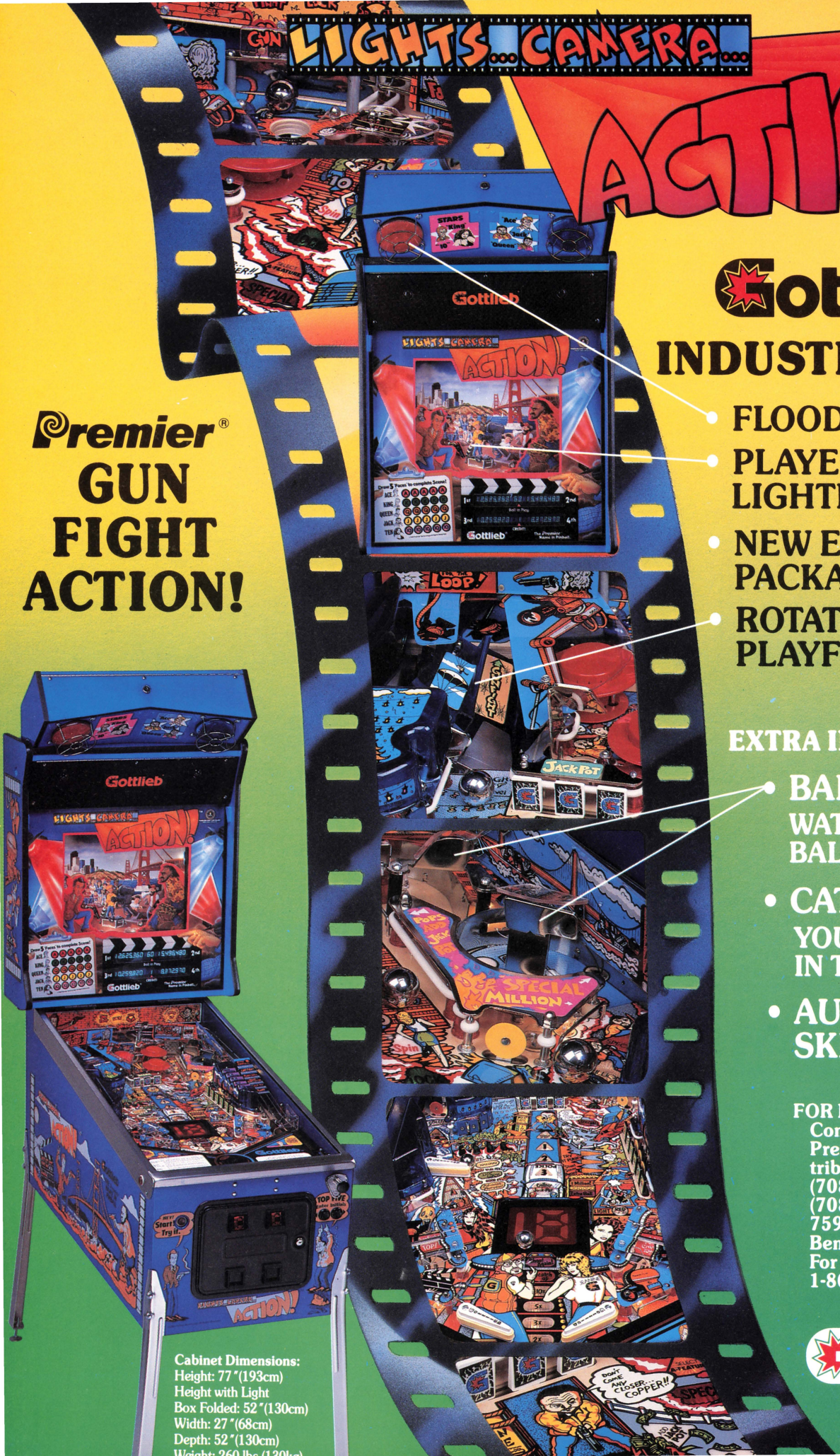

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EQUIPMENT POLL BALLOT

Please rate the games on a scale of one to ten, with ten representing superior earnings. A space has been allowed under each manufacturer's name for a write-in entry.

VIDEO

American Technos:

Block Out	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
WWF Super Stars	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

American Sammy:

Omega Fighter	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Task Force Harrier	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Atari:

Badlands	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Championship Sprint	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyberball	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyberball 2027	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Escape From Planet of Robot Monsters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Final Lap	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Four Trax	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Hard Drivin'	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
RoadBlasters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Skull & Crossbones	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
S.T.U.N. Runner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tetris	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Bally Midway:

Arch Rivals	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tri-Sports	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Capcom:

Buster Bros.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Capcom Bowling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Strider	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
U.N. Squadron	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Willow	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Data East:

Midnight Resistance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Robo Cop	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sly Spy	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Volleyball	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Fabtek:

Cabal	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Dynamite Duke	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toki	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Jaleco:

Astayanax	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Big Run	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Konami:

Bottom of the 9th	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Crime Fighters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
TMNT (dedicated)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Leland:

All Am. Football	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Team Quarterback	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Off Road	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Quarterback	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Nintendo:

Play Choice-10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Mario 3	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
TMNT (kit)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Premier:

Exterminator	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Romstar:

Aqua Jack	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cal. 50	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Castle of Dragon	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Champion Bowling	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Final Blow	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Sega:

AfterBurner	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
E.S.W.A.T.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Golden Axe	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Line of Fire	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
OutRun	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Shadow Dancer	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Shinobi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Hang On	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Masters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Monaco GP	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Turbo OutRun	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

SNK:

Beast Busters	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Gang Wars	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Merchanized Attack	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sky Adventure	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Street Smart	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Super Champ. Baseball	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Strata:

Golden Tee Golf 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Taito:

Chase H.Q. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Crime City 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Nastar Warrior 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Night Striker 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Operation Thunderbolt 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Operation Wolf 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
S.C.I. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
U.S. Classic 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Tecmo:

Ninja Gaiden 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Tecmo World Cup '90 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Williams:

NARC 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

PINBALL

Bally:

Elvira/Party Monsters 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Mousin' Around 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
The Bally Game Show 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Data East:

Time Machine 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Monday Night Football 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Robo Cop 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Gottlieb/Premier:

Bone Busters 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Lights, Camera, Action! 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Williams:

Bad Cats 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Banzai Run 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Black Knight 2000 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Cyclone 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Earthshaker 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
High Speed 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Jokerz! 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Pinbot 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Police Force 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Swords of Fury 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Taxi 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

BASKETBALL GAMES:

Adastra 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Altec 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Design Plus 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Doyle 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Gamemasters 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Grayhound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Intermark 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Kramer 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Pop-A-Shot 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Smart 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Vari-Tech 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Yankee Games 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
_____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

OTHER EQUIPMENT:

Mfg. _____
Game _____ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

_____
_____
_____

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NEWS BULLETIN

■ Following last year's successful promotion, the country's jukebox operators and two major record labels have teamed up to conduct a jukebox "Play Your Heart Out" promotion for the month of February. It will feature the love songs of three contemporary artists at more than 10,000 jukebox locations nationwide.

AMOA is leading the effort; its members own and service about 115,000 of the country's estimated 225,000 jukeboxes. The promotion—also being billed as a jukebox "Love Month" package with Valentine's Day on Feb. 14—will be coordinated through AMOA, Sterling Title Strip (based in Pittsburgh, Pa.), and the nation's one-stop record outlets that sell to the jukebox industry.

The promotion's three featured songs and artists—all new or recently released—are: "How 'Bout Us" by Grayson Hugh on RCA; "Whole Wide World" by A-ME Lorain on RCA; and "Forever" by Kiss on the Mercury/Polygram label.

Jukebox operators can pick up a "Play Your Heart Out" package from their local one-stops for display at their locations. It includes a "Play Your Heart Out" poster, along with special title strips for display at the location. The three featured records and pictures of the artists are highlighted on the poster.

The promotion is the result of recent conversations between the AMOA Jukebox Committee and record labels on joint promotion opportunities. AMOA label liaison Sam Atchley coordinated the "Play Your Heart Out" package. AMOA and the participating labels are underwriting the cost of the printed promotion materials.

■ The appearance of signs and banners featuring Marlboro cigarettes in Sega's *Super Monaco GP* has led to controversy in some circles. Game play includes Marlboro race cars, billboards, banners, and signs in the crowd. Philip Morris, the maker of Marlboro, has disavowed such a presence in *Super Monaco GP* and wants Sega to recall the game. Lenore Sayers, director of marketing for Sega Enterprises Inc. USA, says a chip change is being worked on to remove the objectionable graphics. "New software will be sent out to the field," she added.

In a prepared statement, Dave Rosen, co-chairman of the board for Sega of America, said, "There is absolutely no form of paid or intentional advertising displayed in any of Sega's arcade or consumer video games. The several graphics in question...are simply a game designers innocent attempt to mimic real-life locations and scenery to enhance the realism of game play. Creating realistic play is important to the whole industry."

Continued Rosen, "Any likeness or parody to real products in such graphics is clearly not designed to endorse a real product or promote a lifestyle. Absolutely no company, including Philip Morris, has ever offered to pay Sega to include its products in real or parody form in any of its arcade or video games. It is unfortunate that any group would so erroneously believe that these images were put there for any other purpose."

As a corollary to this story, Play Meter's Valerie Cognevich called a San Diego radio station—from New Orleans—to speak on behalf of Sega and the industry as a whole. It seems that Michael Reagan, son of Ronald Reagan, was inviting callers to phone in and bash Sega over this matter. Randy Fromm, a Play Meter columnist and respected member of the industry, notified Play Meter that the program was in progress. "I think that Sega has gotten a raw deal because of the publicity on this. I'm not saying it was favorable to our industry, but Sega has a reputation for non-violent games and I can't believe they did this intentionally. They are making a super-human effort to correct it. It's just been blown out of proportion," said Cognevich. The outside media, to no one's surprise, has failed to mention all of the charitable work done by this industry over the years. And did The Associated Press report on the "Say No To Drugs" campaign? We think not.

■ Contrary to rumors floating about, manufacturers of video poker machines are *not* under any deadline to be licensed in South Dakota. According to Scott Henneman, director of operations for the state's lottery office, "there is no cut-off period. The law left it wide open for any manufacturer who's interested to enter the market."

At press time, five manufacturers had received approval to operate in South Dakota, which went on-line on Oct. 16, 1989. They are SMS Manufacturing, Merit Industries, Bally, Video Lottery Consultants, and Takisago, a Japanese firm with offices in Las Vegas. Final approval for a U.S. Games video poker machine was pending, Henneman said. The approval process takes one to two months.

"In South Dakota, we do more than regulate; we promote it," Henneman said. "To us, everyone should make money: the player, the operator, and the state. We're happy with how the lottery has turned out so far. It's going very well."

The numbers back up his optimism. There are 2,088 "terminals" (machines) scattered throughout South Dakota. From Oct. 16 to Jan. 12, $26 million was pumped into them. The total net amounted to $9.5 million; the state's net share during this three-month period was $2.1 million. And by Jan. 12, the weekly per-capita spending for pokers had risen to $1.59.

Under the law, there is a $2 maximum bet per play and a maximum payout of $1,000.

■ Mondial International Corp. has organized a new distributing company, Mondial Distributing Inc., to take over its distribution operations in the Springfield, N.J., office. Mondial Distributing is a subsidiary of Mondial International Corp.

The reorganization is intended to separate Mondial's domestic distribution operations from the rest of its activities. However, aside from the formal change in name, these operations will continue as before. Anthony P. Yula is the senior vice president of Mondial Distributing; Anthony J. Yula is the executive vice president.

For more information, call either Tony Yula Sr. or Tony Yula Jr. at (201) 467-9700.

■ Operators in seven radio markets received new jukeboxes in conjunction with an AMOA/Miller High Life jukebox promotion during the month of November. A member operator in each market was selected, based on the total entries each operator received and a random number selection. In other words, the operators with the most entries had a better chance at matching the random number selected. A lucky radio listener in each market also captured a new jukebox.

The operators were allowed to pick a jukebox from one of the following companies: Rowe, Seeburg, Rock-Ola, NSM/Loewen, or Wurlitzer. The winners and their markets were Sunshine Enterprises (Birmingham and Montgomery, Ala.); Pioneer Service Inc. (Cincinnati, Ohio); B & B Music and Video (Cleveland, Ohio); Michigan Nickel Co. (Detroit, Mich.); Mitchell Novelty Co. (Milwaukee, Wis.); Stan Harris & Co. (Philadelphia, Pa.); and H. Lazar & Son (Pittsburgh, Pa.).

■ On Feb. 5, Houston-based Laramie Interests Inc. will move into a new 50,000-square-foot office/warehouse facility near the Astrodome. The four-year old company began in the garage of owners Larry and Tami Morris. Laramie Interests has also implemented the latest computer technology for customer records, invoicing, and inventory management. "The purpose of both moves is to better serve our customers," Larry said. "As always, our success is a reflection of their success as crane operators."

Visitors to the new facility will be treated to a 900-square-foot showroom, sporting samples of every item in stock. Customers can continue to place their orders toll-free: (800) 521-8697 or (800) 237-5874 in Texas. The new address is 3635 Willowbend, Suite 318, Houston, Texas 77054.

■ They're gearing up in Rimini, Italy, for "Spring Enada," the Italian coin machine show, on March 8-11 at the Rimini Exhibition Center. The show is being organized by the Trade Fair Corporation of Rimini and Sapar-Agis. The '89 event drew 70 exhibitors and visitors from 22 different countries (3,684 people in all). Organizers are hopeful for an even larger turnout this year.

In addition to the coin-op amusement and vending machines on exhibit, Spring Enada will consist of meetings to discuss issues vital to the industry. For more information, call 0541/782000; the Telefax number is 0541/774313.

■ Representatives of the Pinball Expo/Flip Out Pinball Tournament, a show dedicated exclusively to pinball enthusiasts, will be in the Data East booth at ACME '90 to promote this year's event. Show organizer Rob Berk and exhibits chairman Mike Pacak will be on-hand to answer questions and hand out information packets to operators. The packets contain expo posters and information for operators who want to sponsor local "expos" of their own.

Pinball Expo '90 is set for Nov. 9-10 at the Ramada Hotel/O'Hare in Rosemont, Ill. This year's program will include a tour of Data East Pinball's production plant and facilities. For those not attending ACME '90 (March 9-11 in Chicago) who want more information on the Pinball Expo, call (216) 369-1192 or (800) 321-2722.

■ The American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA) has a new address: 12731 Directors Loop, Woodbridge, Virginia 22192. The phone number is (703) 494-2758; the FAX is (703) 494-0616.

■ C & L Music and Games of Sacramento, Calif., won $1,000 worth of plush pre-paks from Best Mfg. Co. in the company's January contest drawing. Any customer who placed an order by Dec. 31, 1989, was eligible for the award.

■ Georgia's U.S. Games has moved to more expansive facilities to accommodate an aggressive new service program. The address is 5825-B Peachtree Corners East, Norcross, GA 30092. The phone numbers have not changed: (404) 441-2910 and (800) HIT-GAME. The FAX is (404) 446-2211.

According to president Mike Pace, the improved service center will provide full service on all countertop games. "In the process of supplying *Super Duper Casino* upgrades for all types of countertop equipment, we found that many operators, in order to maximize their investment in the new software, needed to have some hardware serviced," Pace said. "In handling repair work for these operators, we realized the need for a one-stop maintenance facility for all countertop games."

In addition to providing complete repairs, including refurbishing old equipment, the U.S. Games countertop service center supplies replacement parts and installs upgrades. The service center is headed by David Barnett and Deborah Somers.

■ Fabtek's new kit, *Toki*, now has an option called "add player control." This means that *Toki*, a one-player game, can easily be installed into a two-player cabinet. With this option, the game can be played with either the right- or left-player controls.

■ The board of directors for the Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) has issued a challenge to other state association boards with comparable-sized congressional delegations: see if you can recruit more co-sponsors for the dollar coin legislation than us.

Specifically, the challenge applies to any state with a total of 15 or more senators and representatives. OCMA says it will secure a higher percentage of co-sponsors from Ohio's congressional delegation than any other qualified state accepting this challenge. There are two pieces of dollar coin legislation: HR1068 and/or SB814.

Any state that accepts OCMA's challenge and tops its mark will receive a case of fine Ohio wine. But states that lose out to Ohio must supply the OCMA board with a gift of similar value, appropriate to the state (Florida oranges, California champagne, etc.). The ultimate incentive, though, is "to pass the landmark legislation that will aid our industry greatly," according to OCMA president David George.

To accept the OCMA challenge, write Jim Hayes, OCMA Legislation Chairman, c/o Gem Music and Vending Co., 30 N. Clinton St., Dayton, Ohio 45402.

■ Operators in and around South Carolina should make plans to attend the South Carolina Convention and Trade Show on Feb. 23-25 in Columbia, S.C. It will take place at the Sheraton Hotel. The convention will mark the 27th year of the association's existence. For more information, contact Helen Sikes at (803) 345-2048 or (803) 779-2498.

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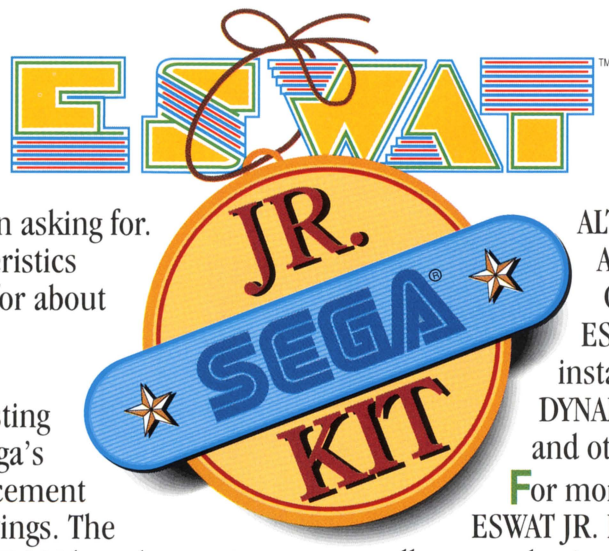

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What type of location draws scores of players already committed to spend their hard-earned dollars on entertainment? You don't have to think long and hard on this one. The answer: bowling centers. California's Paul Spiegel offers his views on these valuable locations gleaned from years of experience.

It's tax season again . . . and the wolf is at your door 61
Back in February 1987 Play Meter started focusing extra attention on the tax season well in advance of April 15th. It's a seasonal quandry that brings many to the brink of mortgaging their belongings in order to meet the demands of Uncle Sam. Now it's a tradition that each February magazine provide an abundance of crucial tax information as that dreaded day draws nearer.

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COVER

Bally/Midway has made a name for itself with videos and pinball games well suited to the needs of street operators. On the cover, staff members gather for an on-the-scene sampling of play with *Tri-Sports* and *The Bally Game Show* at a local tavern in the Chicago area. The traditional touch of whimsy often seen in Bally pinball backglass designs is apparent in the newest product. Hats off to Midway Manufacturing Co.

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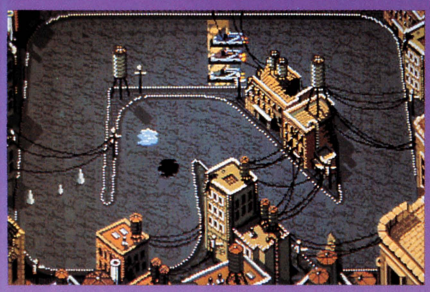
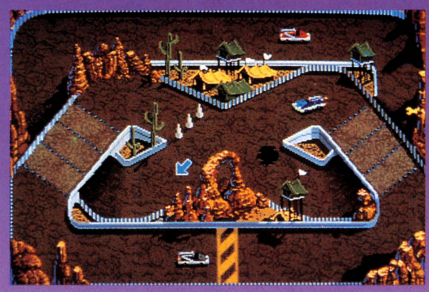
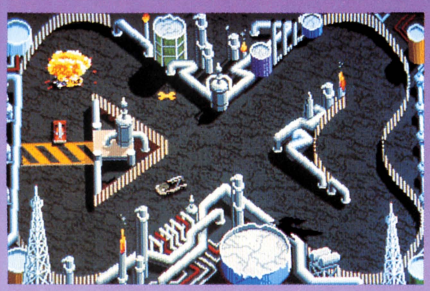


The city—watch out for falling power lines and the falling water tower.



The desert—the mountain will crumble and fall onto the track.



The refinery—be carefull of creating oil spills.

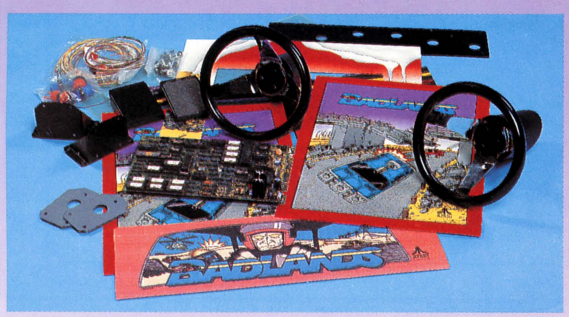
Custom car options include missiles, tires, turbo, speed, and shields.

It has been 50 years since the nuclear disaster. The sport of sprint racing is now a ruthless battle between armed cars. These races take place on tracks built in the ruins of the dangerous nuclear zone known only as the BADLANDS.

This is sprint racing gone BAD! It's all-out war on the track as players blast away at the drones (and each other) to finish first! Players shoot playfield targets for extra points and bonus missiles!

One or two players can race at any time with Badlands' buy-in and game continuation features. If a player loses to one of the drone cars, he can put in another coin to continue on to the next heat and retain any custom car options he has acquired.

Badlands has eight unique track layouts set in eight different animated backgrounds that react to player shots and crashes. These tracks change as the level of difficulty increases.



Kit Components include:

- Game PCB
- Two steering wheel assemblies with universal mounting pods
- Control panel mounting plate
- Two foot pedal assemblies and mounting brackets
- Four fire button assemblies
- Monitor bezel and artwork for header, control panel and side decals
- JAMMA harness

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EQUIPMENT POLL

Buying the right game is a "make-or-break" proposition for the operator, who must have both monthly and ongoing analyses of game performance. This chart is designed to give the operator information he needs to guide his purchases. The "longevity indicator" will tell him how long the game has remained high on the chart. The number of months on the Top 10 is important, as is the total number of months on the chart. Future months will include how long the game was in coin-op before being released for the home market. Look to the chart each month for additional polling information.

VIDEO & PINBALL COMBINED

GAME	MFG.	POINT VALUE	MONTHS ON CHART	MONTHS IN TOP 10	LONGEVITY POINTS
1. TMNT (dedicated)	Konami	9.00	2	2	100
2. Hard Drivin'	Atari	8.72	10	10	487
3. WWF Super Stars	American Technos	8.14	7	6	288
4. Earthshaker	Williams	8.00	10	10	472
5. Super Off Road	Leland	7.93	10	10	470
6. Cyberball 2027	Atari	7.86	4	3	135
7. Police Force	Williams	7.78	4	4	179
8. Cyclone	Williams	7.57	10	10	408
9. S.T.U.N. Runner	Atari	7.52	2	2	87
10. Four Trax	Atari	7.50	1	1	41
11. Monday Night Football	Data East	7.48	4	4	158
12. Elvira/Party Monsters	Bally	7.42	3	3	129
13. Golden Axe	Sega	7.37	7	7	310
14. All American Football	Leland	7.33	3	3	105
15. Team Quarterback	Leland	7.30	10	4	239
16. Operation Thunderbolt	Taito	7.28	10	10	408
17. Final Lap	Atari	7.24	9	8	312
18. Toki	Fabtek	7.22	2	2	82
19. Blockout American	Technos	7.09	1	1	32
20. Crime Fighters	Konami	7.02	7	7	281
21. Quarterback	Leland	6.94	4	1	61
22. Willow	Capcom	6.90	3	3	57
23. Mousin' Around	Bally	6.89	1	1	28
24. Out Run	Sega	6.85	10	7	355
25. Cyberball	Atari	6.83	4	0	75
26. Bad Cats	Williams	6.83	2	2	73
27. Arch Rivals	Bally/Midway	6.82	7	7	261
28. Turbo Out Run	Sega	6.73	10	9	357
29. Jokerz	Williams	6.72	10	10	354
30. Chase H.Q.	Taito	6.71	10	8	327
31. Shadow Dancer	Sega	6.71	1	1	20
32. Midnight Resistance	Data East	6.70	2	1	48
33. Taxi	Williams	6.69	10	10	332
34. Tetris	Atari	6.66	6	5	103
35. U.N. Squadron	Capcom	6.62	2	1	53
36. Cal. 50	Romstar	6.60	1	0	15
37. Super Hang On	Sega	6.56	8	1	171
38. Line of Fire	Sega	6.56	1	0	13
39. Black Knight 2000	Williams	6.55	7	7	204
40. Mechanized Attack	SNK	6.48	7	4	171
41. Strider	Capcom	6.46	1	0	10
42. Operation Wolf	Taito	6.41	9	4	224
43. Crime City	Taito	6.41	2	1	29
44. AfterBurner	Sega	6.38	9	2	158
45. Golden Tee Golf	Strata	6.36	1	0	6
46. Buster Bros.	Capcom	6.33	1	0	5
47. Cabal	Fabtek	6.32	10	9	215
48. High Speed	Williams	6.28	8	7	203
49. Street Smart	SNK	6.26	3	2	59
50. Pinbot	Williams	6.24	10	9	213

VIDEO KITS

	Game	MFG.	POINT VALUE		Game	MFG.	POINT VALUE
1.	WWF Super Stars	Am. Technos	8.14	14.	Cal. 50	Romstar	6.60
2.	Cyberball 2027	Atari	7.86	15.	Strider	Capcom	6.46
3.	Golden Axe	Sega	7.37	16.	Crime City	Taito	6.41
4.	Toki	Fabtek	7.22	17.	Golden Tee Golf	Strata	6.36
5.	Block Out	Am. Technos	7.09	18.	Buster Bros.	Capcom	6.33
6.	Crime Fighters	Konami	7.02	19.	Cabal	Fabtek	6.32
7.	Willow	Capcom	6.90	20.	E.S.W.A.T.	Sega	6.24
8.	Arch Rivals	Bally/Midway	6.82	21.	Capcom Bowling	Capcom	6.23
9.	Turbo Out Run	Sega	6.73	22.	RoadBlasters	Atari	6.21
10.	Shadow Dancer	Sega	6.71	23.	Ninja Gaiden	Tecmo	6.19
11.	Midnight Resistance	Data East	6.70	24.	Championship Sprint	Atari	6.09
12.	Tetris	Atari	6.66	25.	Shinobi	Sega	6.08
13.	U.N. Squadron	Capcom	6.62				

VIDEO DEDICATED

1.	TMNT	Konami	9.00	6.	All American Football	Leland	7.33
2.	Hard Drivin'	Atari	8.72	7.	Team Quarterback	Leland	7.30
3.	Super Off Road	Leland	7.93	8.	Operation Thunderbolt	Taito	7.28
4.	S.T.U.N. Runner	Atari	7.52	9.	Final Lap	Atari	7.24
5.	Four Trax	Atari	7.50	10.	Quarterback	Leland	6.94

PINBALLS

1.	Earthshaker	Williams	8.00	9.	Taxi	Williams	6.69
2.	Police Force	Williams	7.78	10.	Black Knight 2000	Williams	6.55
3.	Cyclone	Williams	7.57	11.	High Speed	Williams	6.28
4.	Monday Night Football	Data East	7.48	12.	Pinbot	Williams	6.24
5.	Elvira/Party Monsters	Bally/Midway	7.42	13.	Robo Cop	Data East	6.13
6.	Mousin' Around	Bally/Midway	6.89	14.	Bone Busters	Premier	6.11
7.	Bad Cats	Williams	6.83	15.	Lights, Camera, Action!	Premier	6.08
8.	Jokerz	Williams	6.72				

OTHER EQUIPMENT: CD JUKEBOXES

1.	Rowe	7.52	4.	Rock-Ola	5.47
2.	NSM	6.47	5.	Wurlitzer	3.88
3.	Seeburg	5.95			

FROM THE EDITOR

Looking back into the future

I don't think it has sunk in yet that we have stepped into a new decade, the final decade of the 20th century. Just 10 more years and we will witness the year 2000 being reveled in.

Can you imagine what our ancestors were experiencing when they stood on the threshold of the 1890s, knowing that in just 10 short years it would be 1900. Here we are 100 years later in a world they would scarcely recognize. Wouldn't it be astounding for them to be transported to our time, maybe landing in the middle of an interstate, a shopping mall, or an airport! I am full of amazement when I ponder the changes that have occurred during this century.

Compare medical advancements, transportation, and communication to what was available 100 years ago. Isn't it just a little overwhelming? I can't imagine no phones, radios, televisions, grocery stores, McDonald's, or microwave ovens! OK, we are horribly spoiled. To drift back to a time that is very unfamiliar to us except what we have read would be an exciting venture indeed. I wonder what those people would think of our world. We can brag on modern technology in all areas of our lives but has it made our lives richer and fuller? The respect for others, our families, the bonds of confident relationships seem to have gotten lost in the race towards filling our lives with mechanical conveniences. Our kids have missed out on bedtime stories told by loving parents who had the time to devote to raising them with the values they themselves had been taught. Instead they are content to let the TV lull them to sleep.

Maybe instead of looking back at how hard times were and comparing them to our easy lives of today, it would be better to try and capture the true friendships and shared experiences people had in those early days. They may not have had much to share, but sharing themselves was somehow enough. How many of you don't even know who lives down the street from you? We have filled our lives with things like TV and commuting to jobs that are filled with stress. It leaves too little time to be examples to the children we are raising or to be friends with our neighbors. We can have everything that money can buy, but love for one another is more precious than any of those things.

Mothers are often raising their kids alone while working full-time jobs. Divorce is so commonplace it doesn't even raise eyebrows anymore.

Things are so different, yet not necessarily better. If we could just combine the best of both worlds—the modern technology with the old-fashioned values that have yellowed with time.

Think of the changes in our industry. It's been 100 years since people were treated to the sounds of music from a machine. It was 60 years ago that the first pinball game offered entertainment for a coin. You can really absorb the reality of progress when you remember that it was only 15 years ago when solid-state electronics replaced electro-mechanical pinball machines and video games were only novelties.

Just as our distant relatives pondered over what life would be like in the 20th century, we contemplate our future. Like them, we must realize that we have absolutely no idea what is in store for us. As we cross over to the last decade of the century, we can only hope it will prepare us for what lies ahead. □

Valerie Cognevich

Valerie Cognevich
Editor

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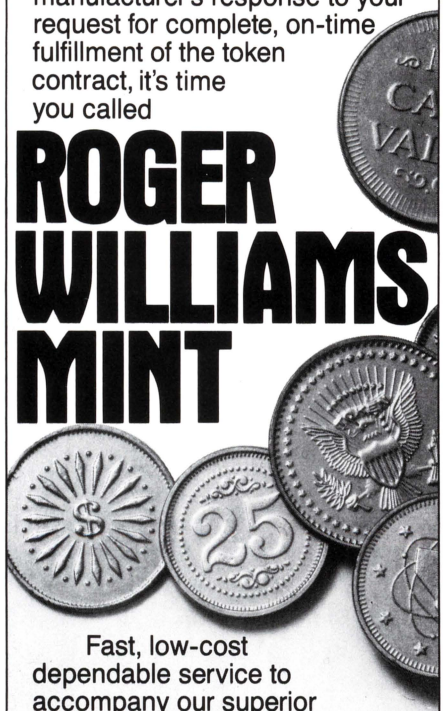

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LETTERS

Pinball Expo coverage

Thank you for the coverage of Pinball Expo '89 you provided for your readers in the November issue of Play Meter.

Although our show is young, it is growing in popularity and interest among all levels of the pinball industry. We were especially happy to have Clyde Knupp and his wife attend our show and see the fulfillment and excitement that he had, not only attending the seminars, but also in purchasing a game. We were also privileged to have Gil Pollock open the doors of Premier Technology for our attendees to tour.

We are anticipating an even greater show next Nov. 9-10, which will once again be held at the Ramada Inn in Rosemont, Ill. We invite old and new faces alike to join the festivities.

If anyone would like information please have them call me at (216) 369-1192 or exhibit chairman Mike Pacak at (800)321-2722.

Robert Berk
Chairman, Pinball Expo
Warren, Ohio

Great interview

Just a short note of thanks for the great article on the interview in your 15th anniversary edition. Please thank Chris; he certainly wrote it just as we spoke over the phone.

My best wishes to you and all of the people who have made Play Meter one of the great coin machine magazines. I never cease to be amazed at the power of the press.

I've received many calls from industry friends who wanted to say that they had read the interview and wanted to chat about business.

Once again, many thanks and please wish my best to all.

Russell Mawdsley
Russell-Hall, Inc.
Holyoke, Mass.

(Russell Mawdsley was Play Meter's first Coinman Interview in December 1974. It was a pleasure to interview him again in our 15th anniversary issue. Thanks Russell.)

Congratulations

I hear that congratulations are in order for the officers, management, and staff of Play Meter for a fine issue in honor of Play Meter's 15th anniversary.

The contribution and commitment of your publication to the industry is definitely evident.

To the next 15 years!

Bob Snyder, Gelly Borromeo, and Viki Beard
Bob Snyder & Associates, Inc.
Walnut, Calif.

Sad loss

I just wanted to drop you a note to say thanks for your expression of sympathy upon the death of my dad. He was a great guy, but as you are all so recently aware, death is something we can't control no matter how hard we try to fight it. We each deal with it in our own way. But it sure is nice to know how much your friends really care. Thanks. □

Bill Beckham
Red Baron
Toledo, Ohio

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Reunions are telling occasions

There are two schools of thought regarding reunions. The first holds that a return to the old school to see old chums is to be avoided because everything has changed. It makes us think of ourselves as older when we see all those faces from the past and what time has done to them. It forces us to admit the changes in ourselves. The second views a return to the scene of one's youth as a much anticipated event; a chance to reminisce about the good old days and the good old times. It gives us a chance to relive a more carefree existence and briefly be young again. Then there's my school of thought: it makes good fodder for a column.

I've notched many reunions on my belt in the last few years, but this one was particularly interesting. The invitation read: "The first social gathering for all Journalism and Communications graduates from 1938-1989." Now that's quite a crowd. Fifty years of graduates. Even if a small percentage showed up it would prove to be an enlightening evening.

The event was held in the Communications/Music Building, which did not exist in my time. I parked in the elevated parking garage built on the site of the old Fieldhouse, which *did* exist in my time. The now-demolished Fieldhouse was the scene of many an exciting basketball match-up, talent night for the energetic if not actually talented students, dreaded final exams, band concerts, and that moment of freedom—graduation night.

As I came out of the parking garage I heard loud shouts from an open field. The scene was a girl's touch football game. Only in the '80s. Walking across campus I couldn't help but notice the very casual attire. Girls didn't wear trousers on campus in the early- to mid-'60s. It was the time of madras skirts, button-down oxford shirts, and weejuns for everyone. A pair of students walking ahead of me through the quadrangle in their stonewashed jeans talked about old cars and named as their favorite the *old* Datsun 240! My idea of a hot old car: the 1959 Chevy Impala convertible, in white with red interior and big cat's eye back tail lights.

When I arrived at the new building, a crowd of mostly unfamiliar faces greeted me. I was as unknown to most of them as they were to me. Slowly I began to make out a few faces from my era. As we huddled and discussed the years gone by, I felt fortunate to be in a business as exciting as the coin-op amusement industry. I found myself surrounded by former classmates in lines of work I did not envy: one-man advertising agency, ad director for a local grocery store chain, and fund-raiser for a hospital.

When I started to explain my work at Play Meter, someone said: "That sounds like a nice, easy job. No pressure. Sure, you have deadlines. But it's not the same with a trade magazine." Wrong, wrong, wrong. Perhaps some magazines have a staid image, but ours certainly doesn't. And our industry is one that's always hopping with something new. There's pressure to be there with the latest information in an industry where equipment quickly becomes stale.

Conversations were interrupted by a brief speech from the instigator of the event, who encouraged us to "network" with each other. The ad director for the grocery store leaned over to me and said: "What is this '80s language? Didn't we just call it *talk*?"

I found myself eager to exit and check out the game room at the student center. Once upon a time there was one pool table. Now there are many (all being played), one jukebox, and a nice sampling of fairly recent equipment, including *Arch Rivals, Golden Axe, Final Blow, Off Road,* and *Tetris*, a natural for college locations. Two co-eds played *Superman* and one student hunched over the pinball *Time Machine*. The jukebox was set at seven plays for $1, in consideration of the clientele's pursestrings. A lively game of foosball was taking place on the side. This was a more comfortable setting for me than the reunion. I was at home among the games. Maybe that's why I went in the first place. □

Bonnie Theard

Bonnie Theard
Managing Editor

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Bally/Midway: Hot on the streets

Happy with the latest pinball product are, (l-r): Steve Blattspieler, vice president of sales and marketing; Ken Fedesna, vice president and general manager; and Laura Rezek, marketing manager.

It's been a frequent coin-op lament: "There are plenty of arcade pieces and not enough good games for the street operator." Midway Manufacturing (manufacturers of Bally/Midway amusement games) plans to change that line of thinking by introducing games specifically targeted for the street operator. "After all," says Steve Blattspieler, Midway's's vice president of sales and marketing, "more than 90 percent of our business lies in the street location."

And street operators have already responded very favorably to the Bally and Bally/Midway lineup of pinball machines and video games that made 1989 a banner year for the company. Featuring the video "basketbrawl" hit *Arch Rivals* and the AMOA '89 "Best of Show" award-winning pinball, *Elvira and the Party Monsters*, Midway began paving the way for street-oriented themes with promotional packages to match.

Players everywhere were caught up in *Arch Rivals*, the basketball game with a sense of humor and capabilities to customize each game to the operator's hometown or favorite team. Every game purchase entitled the operator to receive the "hometown heroes" kit, which included such promo items as *Arch Rivals* team jerseys and awards certificates. "We wanted to help promote both *Arch Rivals* and the operator's location," commented Midway's marketing manager, Laura Rezek. "So we sent out press releases and glossies to all of the hometown newspapers for each location to let the public know about *Arch Rivals* and where they could go to play it."

Blattspieler added, "The one thing we're trying to do is pick universally appealing themes. Ideas come from our game designers, who follow trends and choose subjects that have the potential to become trends. The ideas are then reviewed by a committee, which issues a stamp of approval before the idea progresses to the next level of development.

"We have a very talented group of people here, some of the best in the industry today—from game designers to sound programmers, from mechanical people to graphic designers. Midway's staff has the distinction of being a company that produces all games in-house, made in the U.S.A.," adds Blattspieler. "However, that is not to say that if an opportunity came along for a video product from Japan that we would not consider it."

Speaking of the astute Japanese, what can we expect from them in the future? Blattspieler feels that since the video business is so dominated by the Japanese, if they do not become more creative and innovative as a group, "we're always going to end up in the situation where we have too many games based on an overworked subject."

Does Blattspieler see any new video subject matter coming to the forefront in 1990? "We've definitely had too much of the same. The future games will depend on when manufacturers start to react to this abundance of the same themes. If they reacted last fall, we will see new themes in the spring. If they are not reacting until now, we won't see new material until late 1990 or early 1991.

"However," he continued, "the feeling here is that we are on the cutting edge and the projects in development will be leading the way. In fact, we are very excited about what is coming up for the rest of this year and beyond."

Perhaps the coin-op business could be renamed to match that popular movie, "Risky Business?"

"Video is certainly more 'risky' in the sense of time spent in game development and testing to see if you really have something," responds Blattspieler. "It's hard to keep a continuous line of video

unless you develop a tremendous amount of product. But I truly believe we're fortunate. We are able to devote the time necessary to come out with entertaining product that is dependable and designed, up front, for the street operator."

Pinball games have garnered more attention in the last few years, and forward-thinking operators around the country are trying out 50-cent play. *Elvira and the Party Monsters* was one of the first games shipped from the factory set on 50-cent play. "*Elvira* has proven to be a winner with solid, long-term earnings that have allowed it to compete with even the best videos," says Blattspieler. "And most of those great earnings came from operators who stuck with 50-cent play. We let the players make the choice. *Elvira* was set at one game for 50 cents, two for 75 cents, and three for a buck. We let the consumer choose. And that's still how we are shipping our pinball games today. At some point in time the factory may have to make the decision and not allow the games to be reset to 25 cents a play. You can't try 50-cent play on a few games for just a few weeks and think it can work effectively. It takes a commitment by the operator and quality product from us to have a positive impact.

"Video has the advantage of two, three, or four players simultaneously on one game. This, combined with the buy-in feature, helps video revenue. Right away, with a two-player game, operators get 50 cents a game."

Even though the Japanese are more video-oriented than pinball- oriented, Blattspieler says that for the size of the country it is an important export market for U.S. pinball games. "It is one of the only coin-operated products that the Japanese buy exclusively from us," notes Blattspieler. "They are very in-tune with what happens in the U.S. and can quickly and easily relate to what's popular here."

A continual flow of product is most important, as Blattspieler sees it. "The key in pinball is to develop enough good product so you don't have to bring out too many models per year. We must maintain a continuity of product from model to model and be sure all our games are ready and available within a certain time frame. But it still comes back to the critical issues involved in creating innovative games that appeal to today's players."

This dedicated team has produced the newest Bally pinball winner, *The Bally Game Show*. From left: Tim Elliott, graphic design; Dan Lee, programmer; Pete Perry, co-design; and Tony Pugh, mechanical. Not pictured are Dan Langlois, design; and John Hay, sound.

"The one thing we're trying to do is to select universally appealing themes."

Laura Rezek and Steve Blattspieler with the Bally/Midway street piece, *Tri-Sports*, a game that offers Power Strike bowling, Pool Shark billiards, and Mini-Golf Deluxe miniature golf.

He continued, "We think we've accomplished that with out latest video, *Tri-Sports*, which has some unique qualities to help deliver solid bottom-line returns to the operators. The game offers three major titles in one cabinet: Power Strike (three bowling games), Pool Shark (four pool games), and Mini-Golf Deluxe (18 holes of miniature golf). The game evolved as an adult-oriented piece suitable for a tavern or bowling alley. It's simple and fun to play."

Bally's latest pin, *The Bally Game Show*, features the humorous touches that have become a company trademark. This one is a game show parody, complete with a backglass dominated by toothy emcee Keith McTeeth and a mix of wacky contestants such as I.V. League, Jeri Tol, Candy Fluffhead, and Alvin Pencilneck. Players can look for ramps, wheels, an extra ball feature, and a multi-ball Showcase Bonanza, among other attractions.

As we step into the new decade, Blattspieler cautions operators about maintaining a good mix of equipment. "One popular game creates a tunnel vision buying pattern and some other good games will be overlooked; it's fairly traditional in this business."

From the manufacturing end, he's concerned about too much product being released to the market right now. "All the factory efforts are to maintain sales and runs get shorter and shorter. A glut of product creates confusion in the minds of operators, who then direct all their dollars into one hot product. That's not healthy."

It's an old saw, but a truism in this business: when operators are healthy everyone is healthy. Bally/Midway's efforts to provide street operators with quality product is a healthy sign. Joining Blattspieler in that effort are Ken Fedesna, vice president and general manager, and Laura Rezek, marketing manager. Together with technical personnel and research and development staff members they form the nucleus of the new Midway Manufacturing Company. □

Dynamo teams up with German firm

Dynamo's Mark Struhs (l) with Bernd H. Donalies of West Germany's Stella Electronic Spielgerate GmbH.

Dynamo Corporation has formed a joint venture with Stella Electronic Spielgerate GmbH of Lubbecke/ Westphalia, West Germany, according to Mark Struhs, Dynamo vice president and director of marketing.

Dynamo, based in Richland Hills, Texas, manufactures and markets a wide variety of video hardware systems, as well as pool, air hockey, and soccer tables. Stella, the export arm of the Gauselmann Group of Companies, is a well-known name in the international amusement machine market.

Struhs and Stella managing director Bernd H. Donalies will function as managing co-directors of the new company, named Dynamo-Stella. Initially, all products will be built at Dynamo's facility and shipped to Germany. Plans in the near future include the addition of a German plant for assembly.

Dynamo will help Stella develop and market products for the U.S. market. Stella, in turn, will expand Dynamo's reach into European and other international markets, Struhs said.

A promotion with Hi-C and Williams/Bally

Williams Electronics Games and Midway Manufacturing Co. have become involved in a major nationwide promotional program being staged by Coca-Cola Foods, the makers of Hi-C Fruit Drinks.

In support of their nine-pack fruit drinks, Hi-C is rolling out more than five million drink boxes with the opportunity for consumers to win their own arcade games. Featured prominently on the packages are Williams' *Police Force* pin and Bally/Midway's *Arch Rivals* video game. Ten lucky purchasers will win these games by the time the promotion ends in July.

"The entire promotion is an incredible opportunity to further the mystique and magic of coin-operated amusement games to the consumer public," said Ken Fedesna, vice president and general manager for Williams and Bally/ Midway.

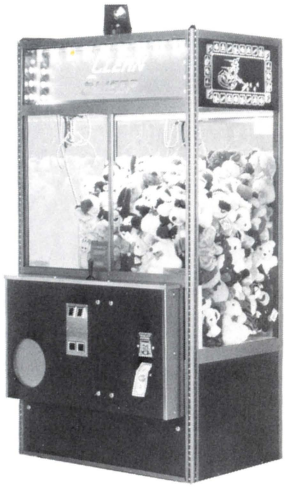
"Whether it's a pinball machine or a video game, most people are attracted to these technological wonders, and with Hi-C they have a chance to win the best machines in the business. Admittedly, we're also extremely pleased to be such an integral part of this Coca-Cola Foods program for the Hi-C brand. I truly hope that this will be only the start of a long-lasting relationship between our companies for future endeavors."

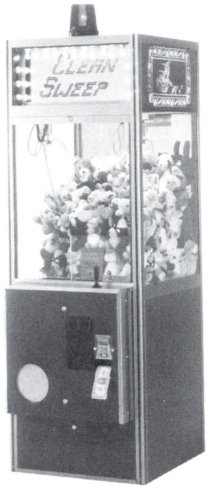
Darts by phone?

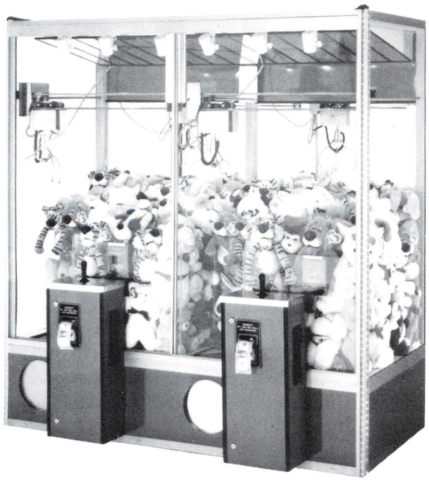
Who says you need a dart board to play darts? Merit Industries recently completed the third round of its "Pub Time Telephone Challenge," which consists of two teams in two bars playing darts over the telephone—from two separate cities, of course. The successful promotion allows the operator to team-up his best players from different bars.

The challenging team pays for the phone call, while the loser pays for shipment of the trophy (if applicable). After three rounds of play, two San Diego-based dart leagues remain undefeated and hold the two traveling trophies: Dynamic Darts and Top Flight Darts.

To challenge the winners, or for further information, contact Rick Lynch at (619) 273-1028 or Merit Industries at (800) 523-2760.







Smart Industries has unveiled a new style for its *Clean Sweep* line of cranes. The company has improved many of the cranes' features to help operators in the ever-growing field of redemption. Pictured, the *1990 Clean Sweep Jumbo* (42" wide), the *1990 Clean Sweep Single*, and the *Classic Jumbo*.

Kiddie ride group forms association

A new association—the American Kiddie Ride Association—has been formed as a separate segment of the coin machine business. Its purpose is for the unity and betterment of the kiddie ride industry.

Here is the slate of officers: Thomas N. Theisen, Theisen Vending Co., president; Steve Caplan, Universal Vending Co., vice president; Jerry Reda, Just Kiddie Rides, treasurer; Fred Gillmann, Just Games Inc., secretary; and Anita J. Bennett, executive director. The association address is 3800 Nicollet Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55409. The phone number is (612) 827-5588 in Minnesota or (800) 633-3436 out of state; the FAX is (612) 827-7543.

The first annual meeting will be held on March 10 in Chicago at 9 a.m. It will take place in Suite 1601 at the Allerton Hotel, 701 No. Michigan Ave., in conjunction with the ACME show. The first election of the charter board of directors is one of the items on the agenda.

The association will offer a competitive insurance and financing package for kiddie rides. Membership is open to interested parties at the rate of $50 per year for regular and associate members. For more information, contact Marty Gall at (800) 633-3436.

James to represent Mars validator line

Steve Kinder (l) of Mars Electronics with Jim Roberts of James Industries. James has become the exclusive representative for the Mars Electronics bill validator.

Mars Electronics has appointed James Industries the sales representative for its bill validator product line in the United States and Puerto Rico. The relationship encompasses all OEMs in the games/amusements, gaming, and lottery industries.

"Everyone at James is very pleased and excited to be representing a world leader in electronic payment systems," said Jim Roberts, chairman of James Industries.

For more information on the Mars bill validator, contact John Blouin or Vince DiVincenzo at James Industries, 1619 Colonial Parkway, Inverness, IL 60067; (708) 358-8000; FAX (708) 358-7851.

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BLOCKOUT IS THE '90s!

BLOCKOUT:
New 3-Dimensional play perspective.

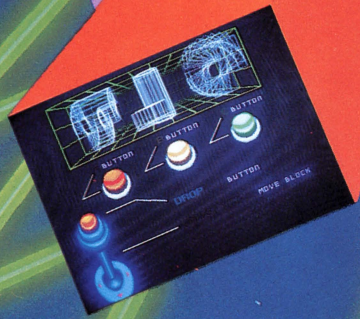
TETRIS:
Traditional 1-Dimensional play perspective.

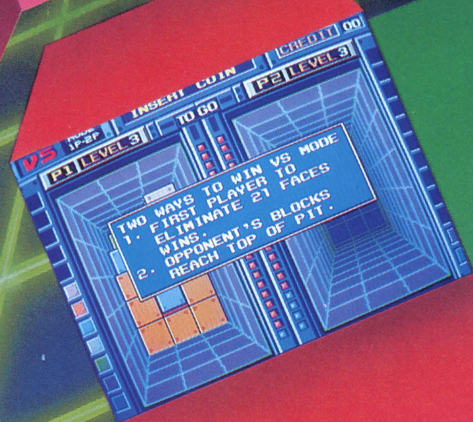
BLOCKOUT:
2-player interactive/ competitive feature.

TETRIS:
2-player feature as 2 independent games.

BLOCKOUT:
Change of playfield from stage to stage.

TETRIS:
Same playfield from stage to stage.





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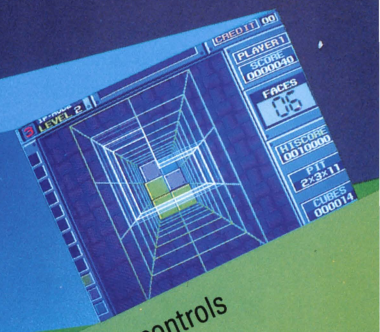

BLOCKOUT features:

- Start level select
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- 100 different stages
- Bonus round on completion of certain stages
- Unique game controls configuration
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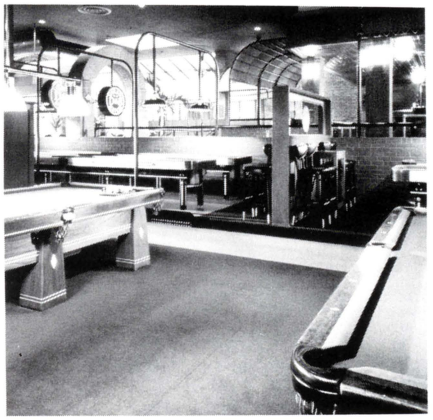
Edison Bros. buys Dave and Buster's

Edison Brothers Stores Inc. has purchased a majority interest in Dave and Buster's of Dallas. Dave and Buster's operates two restaurant/entertainment complexes; each location is free-standing and has about 30,000 square feet. Sales for 1989 exceeded $10 million.

"The Dave and Buster's slogan is, 'There's no place quite like it,' and we think that's absolutely true," said Martin Sneider, president of Edison Brothers. "It's a one-stop, all-afternoon or all-evening entertainment destination that appeals to a wide spectrum of young people."

Founders Dave Corriveau and Buster Corley will continue to operate Dave and Buster's as part of Edison Brothers Entertainment, a new division of Edison Brothers. They each will retain an equity interest in Dave and Buster's and will direct the national expansion of the concept.

"We are excited about taking our concept to other major markets and giving the customers what they want, which is great food, great fun, and the best of times," Corriveau said.



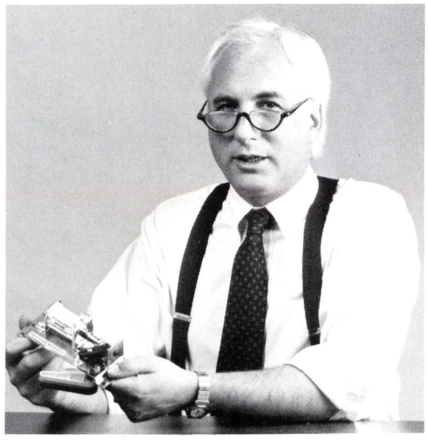
The billiards area at Dave and Buster's in Dallas.

Gussin changes role

Scott Gussin, formerly sales manager at Alter Enterprises, has changed his status to an independent sales representative for the company. This will allow Gussin to pursue his own interests, i.e., The Prop Shop, which is involved in the design and manufacture of custom props and miniatures for the industry. He will continue to be affiliated with Alter Enterprises in regard to sales of equipment.

Gussin can be reached at The Prop Shop, (201) 579-3694, or Alter Enterprises, (201) 616-1111.

Data East issues pinball guarantee



Data East Pinball's Gary Stern with the company's new solid-state flipper assembly.

Gary Stern, general manager of Data East Pinball, has announced a guarantee in conjunction with the company's solid-state flippers. Said Stern, "Beginning with *RoboCop*, Data East pinballs will be equipped with what I believe is the technological advance of the decade for pinball machines. All of these games have solid-state flippers. I am so confident that I will guarantee no flipper coil burnout for one year on *RoboCop* pinball machines delivered in North America. (Otherwise) I will supply a replacement coil for free." See your local Data East Pinball distributor for details.

The solid-state flipper eliminates the need for an end-of-stroke switch. According to a Star Tech Journal survey, up to 24 percent of pinball problems are associated with flippers. And, to a large extent, these flipper failures are caused by end-of-stroke switch problems. The solid-state flipper permits the use of gold-plated contact points, switching 5 volts, instead of 50 volt tungsten points on the cabinet flipper switches. Tungsten points arc, pit, and get dirty—causing failures.

The U.S. Patent Office has approved Data East's claims for a solid-state flipper patent.

King makes Newsweek pages

Rufus King, who served for many years as an attorney for various coin-op companies (and Play Meter magazine), can claim a "first" for the new decade: his "My Turn" guest commentary appeared in Newsweek magazine's Jan. 1, 1990, issue. No, the topic isn't coin-op amusement. Rather, it's a piece on the drug problem titled "A Worthless Crusade."

King, who practices in Washington, D.C., "served several congressional investigations and has written extensively on drug-law reform," according to Newsweek.

Correction

In our November News section, we reported that Baton Lock and Hardware Co. had been dissolved. Such is not the case; the company is in business. The address is 11521 Salinaz, Garden Grove, CA 92643. The phone number is (800) 395-8880 or (714) 534-0311. All inquiries should be forwarded to Ed Cipollina, national sales manager.

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C.A. Robinson's Tom Campbell and his new bride, Valerie. The couple were married in San Francisco on Oct. 28, 1989. Congratulations!

Okay, readers, we'll give you three guesses as to where this photograph was taken. Maine? No. Minnesota? Wrong again. Alaska? Three strikes, you're out. It's New Orleans, the U.S. city with sticky humidity and one week of winter. This photo was snapped on Dec. 22. We've been dreaming of a white Christmas for years and finally got one!

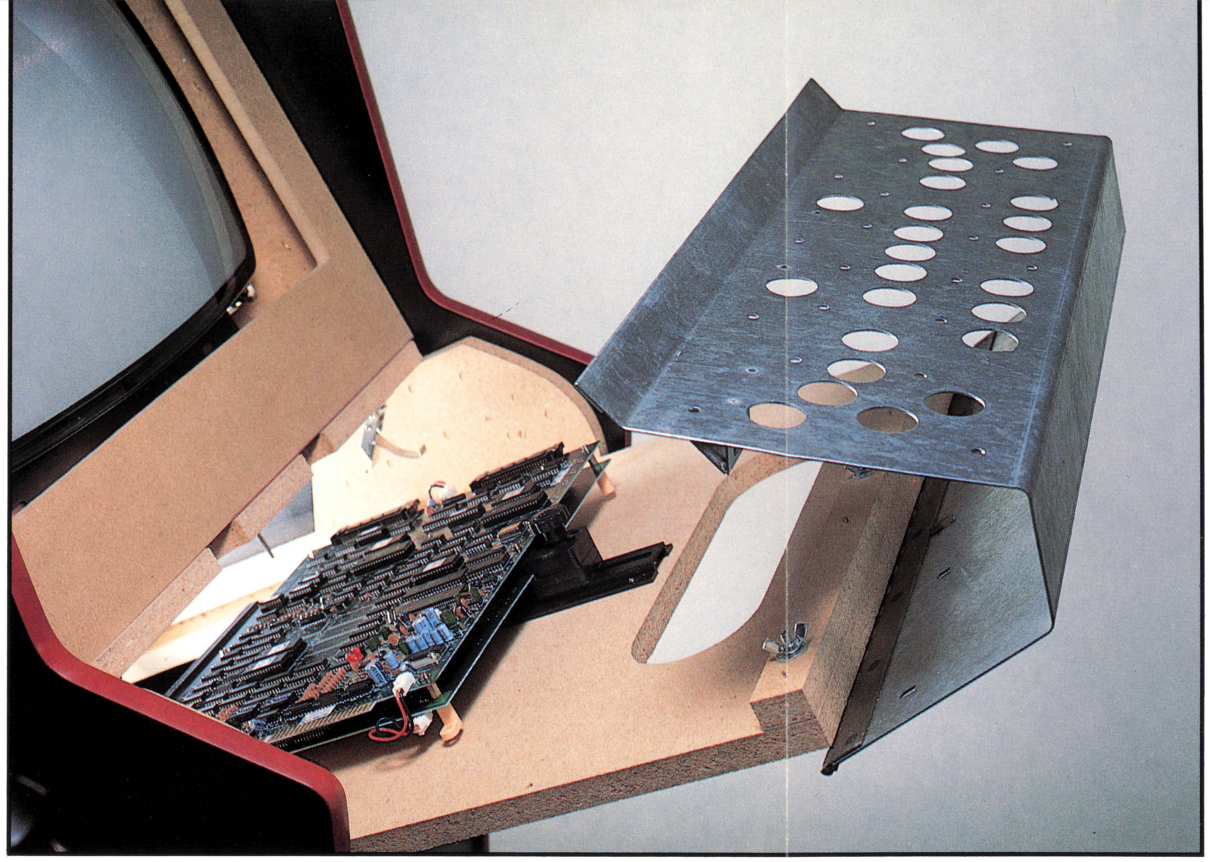
Pioneer Laser adds Scribner

Pioneer Laser Entertainment (PLE) Inc. has appointed Paul R. Scribner to the post of national sales manager for the jukebox division. In his new position, Scribner will coordinate and operate the national distribution network for PLE's CD and LaserDisc jukeboxes. He will also oversee all marketing, advertising, and public relations activities for the products.

Previously, Scribner founded and operated Game Room Amusement Co., a food vending machine and video game distribution company. He has also held sales and marketing positions for AM Bruning, CalComp, and Kodak.

"Paul's appointment demonstrates our commitment to the PLE jukebox line," said Ted Karasawa, president of PLE. "His extensive experience in both product marketing and the coin-op industry will assist us in becoming a major manufacturer in the jukebox market."

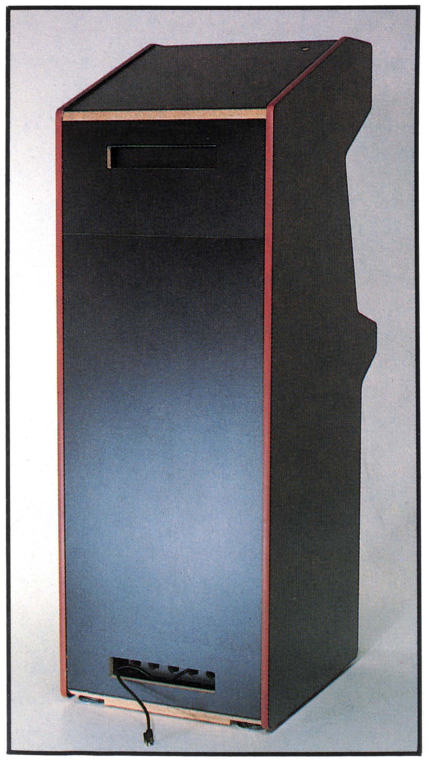
Paul Scribner



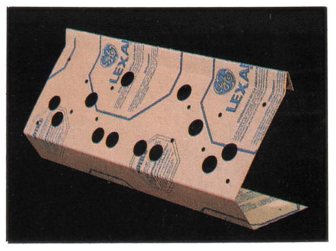
Westerberg Creative Photography

A truly secure "works-in-a-drawer" is standard in the MH cabinet. Not only is it super easy for kit installation, but game rotation on location is a breeze.

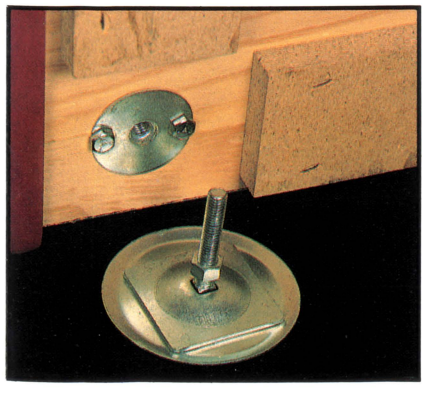
Our cabinet adds longer life to your kits by keeping them cool. We use a 15 watt fluorescent light fixture and have two cooling vents in each cabinet.



Wrap around T-molding is available in a variety of colors with only one well hidden seam. Cooling vents double as power cord storage.



Pre-punched steel control panels insure that joystick-button layouts are designed for maximum playability and super fast kit installation. LEXAN Shield covers the complete control panel exterior to give your kits that better than dedicated look.



MH's indestructible leg leveler mount insures lasting stability.

FORM & FUNCTION

The MH cabinet performs as good as it looks. Our pride in craftsmanship and rugged construction create a low maintenance design which protects your kit investment and provides years of profitable performance.

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How often have you as an operator been stuck with expensive equipment that either nickel and dimed you to death or needed a major overhaul before it left its first location?

Are your present video game cabinets' leg levelers breaking off? T-molding pealing away? Control panels falling apart?

The MH cabinet does not have these problems. We at M.H. live by a simple concept. Real World testing in Real World locations develops Real World reliability.

Here is a cabinet designed to withstand high volume usage.

A cabinet designed for operators!

— Selected Features —

- Competitively priced.
- Hard baked plastic finish.
- One piece wrap around T-molding.
- Extra large leg levelers.
- 5 year warranty on 12-amp power supply & 240 volt amp isolation transformer.
- Extra large universal control panel with pre-punched holes.
- Works-in-a-drawer for easy game rotation.
- Vertical or horizontal monitor rotation.
- Power cord stores inside cabinet for easy moving.

Valerie Cognevich

Slip your game into something new

Operators have become quite attached to conversion kits, but there was a time when operators doubted they would ever accept them. Instead of paying for "hardware" each time, there is now the option to purchase just the PC board, graphics, and decals and put it into a cabinet already on hand. When the concept for conversion kits was first introduced to the industry in the early '80s, operators weren't so gung-ho about the idea.

David Rosen of Sega told his distributors in 1982 that the video market would in the near future be 65 percent conversion kits. That same year Sega introduced *Zaxxon* as a dedicated game, so operators were even more skeptical about Rosen's prediction. After all, they reasoned, if Rosen is so sure kits will make an impact on the industry, why didn't Sega introduce *Zaxxon* as a kit?

Data East had taken the initiative with its Deco System in the early '80s. The system allowed operators to simply change a cartridge in games instead of moving the entire game. It was an interesting concept but not readily scooped up by operators. And of course, the games available were not on the same level as dedicated games like *Pac-Man*. Now many are calling it an idea before its time.

By the time the video boom devastated the coin-op industry, operators were looking hungrily toward kits to help them utilize the mountains of cabinets collecting dust in their warehouses. These cabinets had been the home of 90-day wonders; the game died long before the hardware was obsolete. Although at the time the feeling was that only mediocre games would be introduced as kits, operators felt that they could still do better recycling hardware with a cheap kit. No one showed them anything to change their minds until Universal gave the industry *Mr. Do!*. It was one of the top *games* of the year, not just one of the top *kits*. After that other manufacturers showed operators that kits could feature really top games.

With that many kits being introduced, there was bound to come a time when good kits outnumbered available cabinets for conversion.

Operators then had plenty of cabinets to change over to conversion kits. When top games were being bought in quantity, resale and trade-ins were practically non-existent, so once the game had run its course, the carcass was stacked up on many others. These games were brought out of retirement and fitted with new PC boards and, voila, a new game was put out on location.

David Rosen's prediction of 65 percent conversion kits turned out to be an understatement. Today cabinet manufacturers report the kit market as high as 90 percent of video sales.

When operators first saw the benefit of installing a new game into an old cabinet, it wasn't really as easy as just sticking a new PC board into an old cabinet. First, the game hardware was not made to be converted, so wiring was permanent. It took lots of soldering to change over from one to the other. A game conversion took many hours of time-consuming work. But for the price, it was worth it.

With that many kits being introduced, there was bound to come a time when good kits outnumbered available cabinets for conversion. "When a dedicated game is introduced, the manufacturer isn't looking beyond the cabinet enduring more than the lifespan of the game that comes with it," noted one cabinet manufacturer. "I would estimate that a cabinet originally sold as a dedicated game might last two years. Of course, if an operator has locations where customers are not very hard on games, a cabinet could last longer."

Another cabinet manufacturer noted that operators do not even attempt to convert some dedicated game cabinets. "Take *Double Dragon* cabinets, for example. An operator would most likely toss it on a bonfire before trying to reuse

it,'' he pointed out, commenting on the lack of quality in the cabinet.

Gary DuBoff of East Coast Designs said that operators may not fully understand the benefits of using system cabinets. ''I think there is some misunderstanding in the industry on using a system cabinet. In fact, some may not even be utilizing these cabinets to their full potential.''

He explained, ''The whole purpose in buying a system cabinet is being able to minimize the time a cabinet is in the shop. It is not necessary to bring a game back to do a conversion. It can be done in the location, or an extra drawer can be kept on hand to do the conversion and then simply carry the drawer to the location and swap it out. The cabinets today are much more durable with laminated sides, so old decals can be easily peeled off and replaced.''

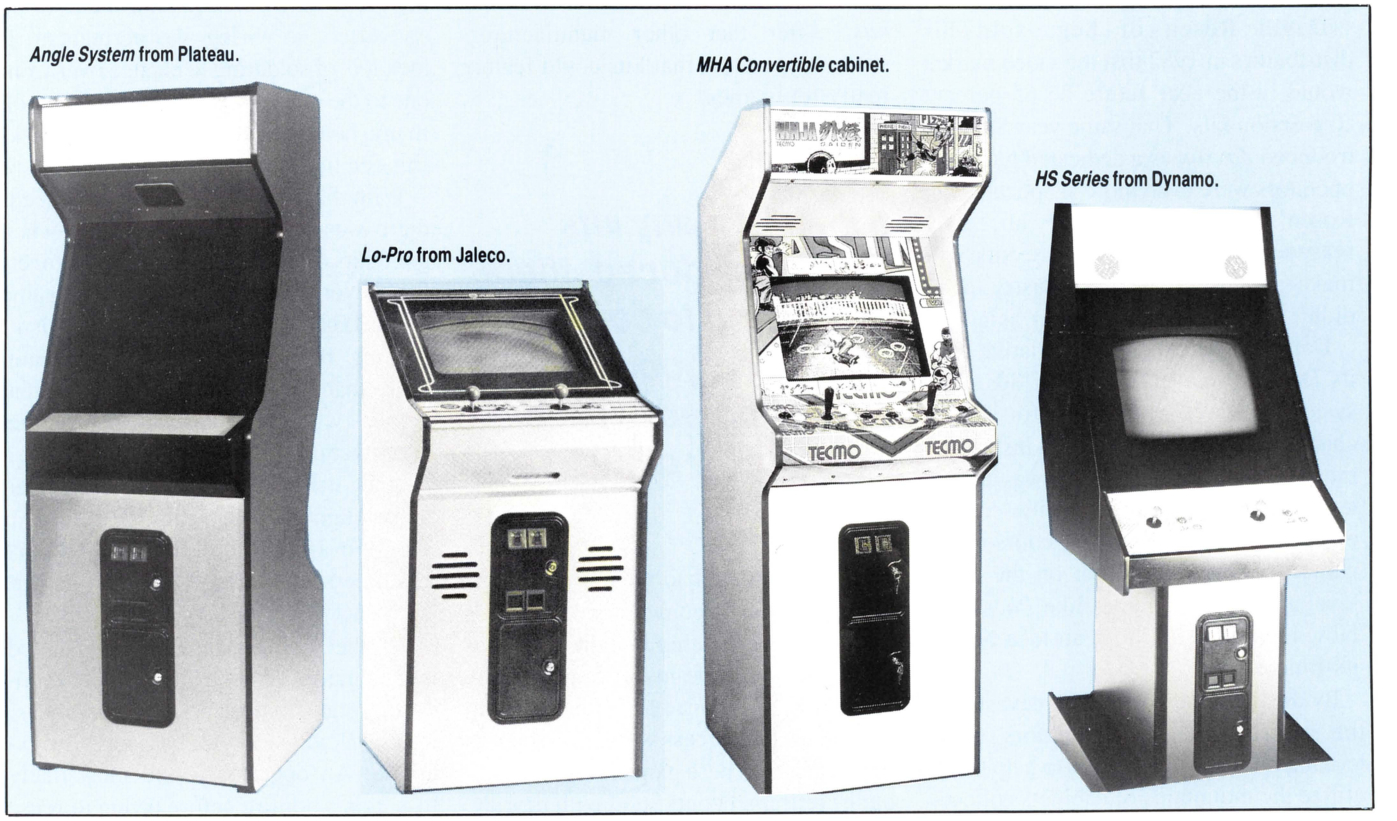
DuBoff serves on a standardization committee along with Todd Erickson and Bill Rickett. ''We are not looking to entice everyone into making the same cabinet. We would just like to see some standard features like locks, coin mechs that either accept Canadian coins or reject them properly, leg levelers that are anchored into steel or use a steel plate so the levelers do not break out, and the location of the on and off switch.''

Dynamo president Rickett was the first to manufacture a cabinet system for operators. Mark Struhs explains, ''We were building dedicated games for manufacturers and saw a major shift from dedicated to kits. The runs of dedicated games were getting smaller, so we saw first-hand the trend. We were also aware of the wood that operators were using to convert games. It was beat up to begin with, and once it was converted several times it was deplorable.''

He continued, ''Through evolution, our system cabinets became more sophisticated. Our goal was to offer a universal cabinet that operators could use to convert game after game with minimal work. Our first system cabinets featured a wiring harness adapter board. With it, an operator could plug a PC board into the interface board which would adapt it to our wiring harness. It was crude by today's standards, but at the time it was one of a kind. Today, the JAMMA wiring harness is standard. About 96 percent of all PC boards are adaptable to the JAMMA harness. Today we offer 11 different cabinets for all types of use.''

Converting a game in the early days was not without its pitfalls. Sometimes an operator was in such a hurry to get the game out that he failed to do everything necessary to make the game look new. ''I have seen games that had the old decals on the side or on the front that looked pitiful,'' noted one operator. ''It definitely does not attract players when a game is done half-ass.'' But converting a cabinet designed for one particular game took effort just to get it looking decent. It usually had to be repaired and repainted. Then there was the problem of fitting the game into what was already there. It was a good day's work. It was worth it when conversion kits cost under $500. Today, the majority of kits cost well over $1,000.

The industry has come a long way from its humble kit beginnings. Today there are many options when it comes to cabinets and systems. Instead of just mak-



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THE BEST VIDEO HARDWARE SYSTEM JUST GOT BETTER.

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- NEW • All plywood front wall and floor for added strength
- NEW • Protective trim eliminates damage to cabinet bottom
- NEW • Monitor controls positioned up front for adjustments*
- NEW • Solid back panel adds strength and eliminates rear access*
- NEW • One piece wrap-around t-moulding and leg levelers keep cabinet looking good
- Slide-out drawer for easy conversion from front of cabinet
- Oversized control panel of heavy gauge steel with pre-punched holes accommodate most game configurations
- High quality Wells-Gardner monitor
- Monitor can be easily positioned either vertically or horizontally
- JAMMA standard wiring harness
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- Lighted, quick-change marquee
- Industry standard over/under coin doors
- Top mounted on/off switches for convenience

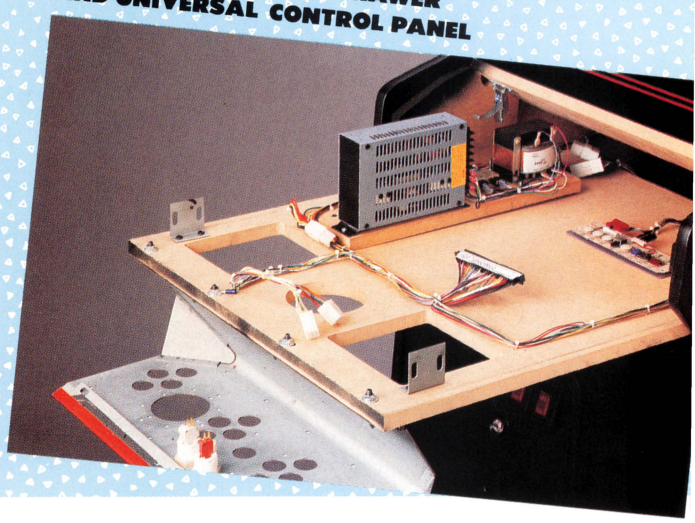
*Not available on HS-1

HS-2: 19″ MONITOR WITH SLIDE-OUT DRAWER

HS-5: 25″ MONITOR WITH SLIDE-OUT DRAWER

HS-1: (NOT SHOWN) Same as above, without drawer

EXCLUSIVE SLIDE-OUT DRAWER AND UNIVERSAL CONTROL PANEL



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ing do with what is available, operators have a choice of top-quality cabinets and systems. Some companies sell a stripped model consisting of only the cabinet itself. Operators can add their own monitor and wiring. There are also "system" cabinets that come complete with monitor (choice of sizes usually adjustable to vertical or horizontal), wiring (the JAMMA wiring harness is the standard), controls, coin handling equipment, etc. The cost of a system cabinet ranges from $800 to $1200 depending on what is included.

"Ours come with everything an operator needs to convert a game except the PC board," said Mark Haim of R.H. Belam, which sells the MegaTech system and the Belam Grand cabinet.

The MegaTech is a multi-game cabinet manufactured by Sega that comes complete with eight games that fit into the cabinet. It comes with eight current games; for example, there's *Out Run, Altered Beast, Forgotten World, Shinobi, Ghouls and Ghosts,* and *Super Hang On.*

Andy Berglund of K.D. Industries says that his company's cabinets were designed by operators. His partner, Todd Erickson, is an operator with very definite ideas. K.D. offers either the stripped cabinet or the loaded-out one. The stripped one consists of just the cabinet, whereas the loaded-out one comes complete with everything an operator would need to do a first-class conversion. K.D. also has interchangeable parts. "If an operator has a cabinet with a kicked-in front panel, he can order a front panel from us and in an hour he'll have a new-looking cabinet."

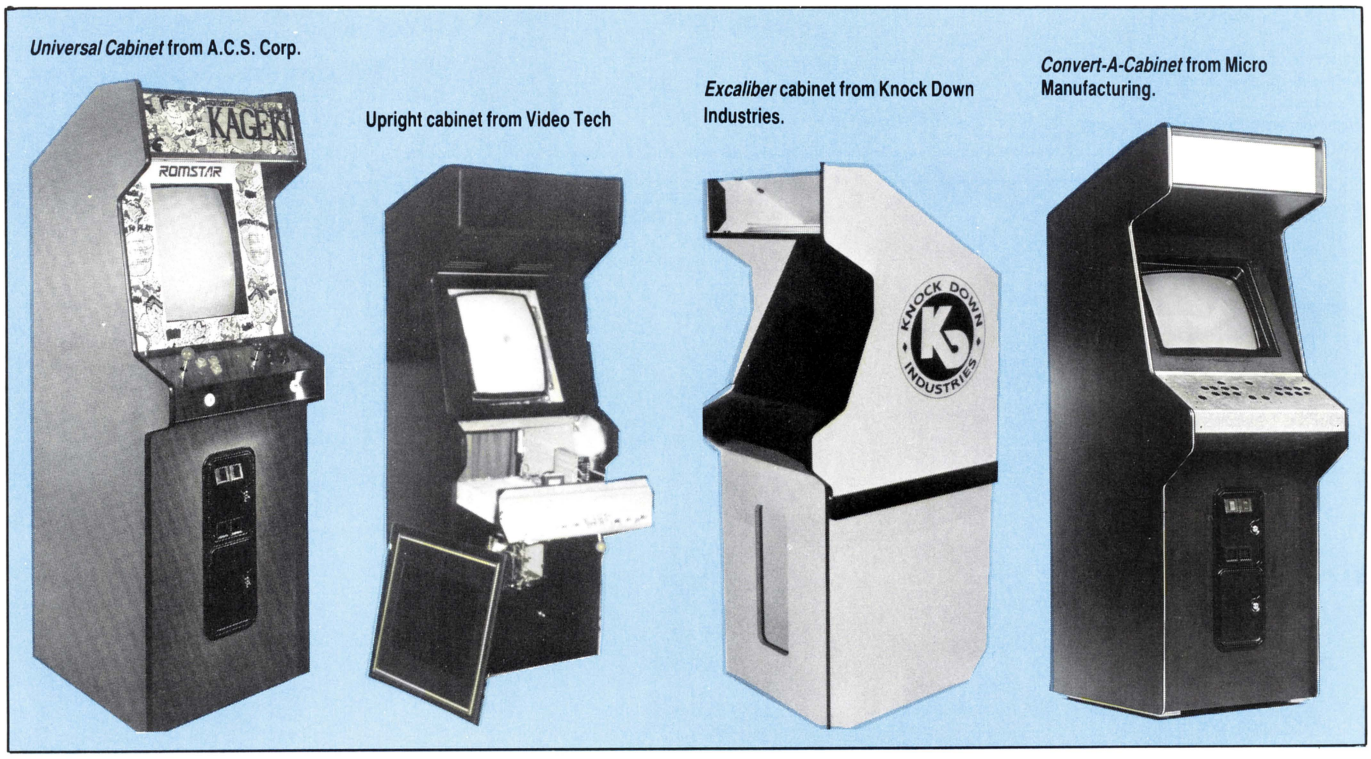
David Rosen of Sega told his distributors in 1982 that the video market would in the near future be 65 percent conversion kits.

Gene Seiben of M.H. Associates points out that using a system can greatly reduce rotation time for operators. "When an operator has to rotate a game, it involves moving the entire cabinet; it is time-consuming and a pain in the neck. With a system cabinet, he can simply unlatch the pull-out drawer and with the color-coded wiring, insert a new game with minimum trouble and effort," he explained.

He added that nearly all conversion kit boards are JAMMA compatible.

David LeAnna of Plateau pointed out that with his Angle System cabinets, software can be changed in a matter of minutes. "Operators who use the Angle System benefit from the drawer concept incorporated into our system cabinet. The drawer houses the software and can be changed in a matter of minutes. Some operators do collections in vans that have been fitted to carry spare drawers. This allows them to change the game on the spot when revenues decline instead of incurring additional costs by sending trucks and personnel to change the games later," said LeAnna. He added that the control panel and plexi are predrilled for one- or two-joystick games.

Jaleco is offering a new Lo-Pro cabinet with the works in a drawer, Larry Berke says the cabinets were designed to fill a need for a "new look" to stimulate play. He added, "These Lo-Pro cabinets enable an operator to place them in the



Universal Cabinet **from A.C.S. Corp.**

Upright cabinet from Video Tech

Excaliber **cabinet from Knock Down Industries.**

Convert-A-Cabinet **from Micro Manufacturing.**

What's small in height, but big on features?

Introducing the Lo-Pro™ from Jaleco.™ It stands only four feet tall, but it's packed with fantastic features for you and your players.

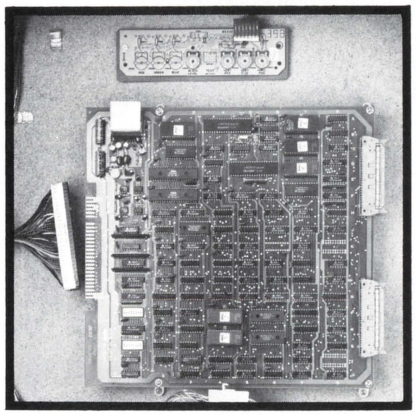
Players will be dazzled by the visual impact of the 19″ Wells-Gardner universal monitor. It's quickly converted to either horizontal or vertical play by unscrewing only four easily accessible bolts.

Standard JAMMA cables and connectors make conversion to a new kit simple. A universal control harness fits any 1, 2 or 3 button game that uses 1 or 2 joysticks. Unlike other cabinets, Lo-Pro lets you complete all conversions in front, with no need to remove back panels. Dual speakers offer players stereo sound and excitement.

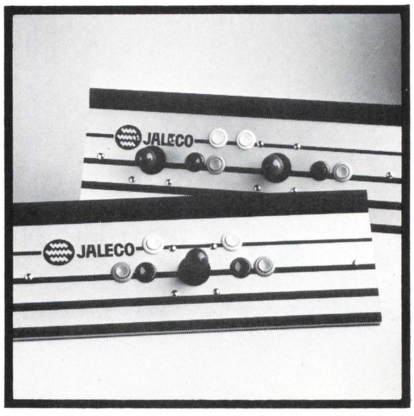
Custom designed and assembled using screws and hardwood cleats, the Lo-Pro offers years of dependable and durable service. For more information, contact Larry Berke.

- 19″ Wells-Gardner Universal Monitor.
- Horizontal and vertical overlays.
- Converts quickly by removing 4 bolts.

AVAILABLE WITH 25″ MONITOR!



- Standard JAMMA cable and connectors fit any compatible PCB and universal control panel.
- Monitor adjustment board mounted in drawer for easy accessibility and adjustment.



- Two blank panels included for 1 or 2 joystick controls. Joysticks and buttons not included.
- Panels slide in or out by removing 2 bolts.

JALECO™

Jaleco USA, Inc.
5617 West Howard
Niles, Illinois 60648
(312) 647-7077

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center of a location, and the attendant can have visual contact with the entire room.''

What do operators look for when buying a cabinet or a system cabinet? Gene Ridell, the maintenance supervisor at Jollytime Amusements, does many conversions, some in older cabinets and some in new ones. He said that doing a conversion in an older cabinet takes up to 12 hours, compared to under three hours in a new cabinet system. His company buys new cabinets with 25-inch monitors only. ''The 25-inch monitor is superior to smaller ones,'' he noted. ''We look for a JAMMA wiring harness, which is pretty standard on most cabinets today. We also pay close attention to the construction and the exterior. The East Coast Design cabinet, for example, is put together with angle brackets bolted together for strength. Some are glued and stapled. We also prefer the exterior to be formica instead of simply painted. It is much easier to remove old decals, chewing gum, or whatever from formica.''

Randy Fromm of Randy Fromm's Arcade Schools offered these suggestions: check to see if the cabinet is plywood or particle board; make sure the monitor is easily changed from vertical to horizontal; find out if it comes with a power supply and an isolation transformer and see how they are mounted; and check to see if it has wheels, leg levelers, and interchangeable parts.

No one showed them anything to change their minds until Universal gave the industry Mr. Do!.

Even with the large choice of top-quality cabinets to make a kit look as good as a new, DuBoff of East Coast Designs says that the industry is changing drastically and must continue to do so. ''The manufacturers are going to have to get aggressive and introduce some money-making dedicated games. Even if a game costs $10,000, if it makes money, operators will buy it. Distributors can't make a living on selling kits alone. Some distributors aren't acting like distributors anymore.''

Duboff sees the industry shifting more of its focus on redemption pieces. ''Redemption is still fairly new and manufacturers are still coming up with new and unique ideas in redemption. Plus there is no home market competition in that area. No one is going to put redemption equipment in their homes; it wouldn't make sense.''

But for now, operators will continue to convert games and hope for dedicated pieces to entice players into spending their quarters. □

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Fax: (612) 784-9628

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Cabinet and system manufacturers

R.H. Belam
One Fulton Ave.
Hempstead, NY 11550
513/542-1000
FAX: 516/486-0957
MEGATECH SYSTEM: Multi-game (8 games in one cabinet); comes with eight current games.
BELAM GRAND CABINET: complete with monitor, player controls, JAMMA wiring harness, coin handling equipment.

Dynamo
2525 Handley-Ederville Rd.
Richland Hills, TX 76118
817/589-7699
FAX: 817/284-7606
BENCHMARK SERIES: plywood front, protective trim, solid back panels, wrap-around T moulding, slide-out drawer, oversized control panel, JAMMA wiring harness, heavy duty power supply, standard coin doors.
BIG BOY: 25-inch monitor
COCKTAIL SERIES: rectangular, round, or square top.

East Coast Design
700 Reading Ave.
Hammonton, NJ 08037
609/567-1700
FAX: 609/567-3255
UV SERIES: In either 19-inch or 25-inch, melamine-laminated fiberboard, lift-and-lock slide out drawer, interchangeable components, tubular steel inner frame, JAMMA wiring harness, deep control panel, casters mounted into steel frame.

Jaleco
5617 W. Howard St.
Niles, IL 60648
708/647-7077M
FAX: 708/647-7087
LO-PRO SERIES: 19-inch or 25-inch monitor, Wells-Gardner monitor, works-in-a-drawer, two control panels for one- or two-joystick play.

K.D. Industries
220 Robinhood Lane
Circle Pines, MN 55014
612/786-7766
FAX: 612/784-9628
EXCALIBER: 19-inch or 25-inch monitor, ships flat, removable control panel plywood slide-drawer system, durable plywood construction, JAMMA wiring harness, side impact bumpers, rear steel corner protector with enclosed 3-inch casters.

M.H. Associates
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Fargo, ND 58102
701/282-7877
FAX: 701/282-7779
MHA CABINET: Melamine coated, universal control panel, works-in-a-drawer, extra large leg levelers, screwed and glued cabinet with plywood floor, vertical or horizontal monitor, cashbox.

Micro Manufacturing
535 Old Nashville Hwy.
Lavergne, TN 37086
615/793-5510
FAX: 615/793-5512
POKER STYLE CABINET: 13-inch or 19-inch Wells Gardner monitor, $1-$20 bill validator, Wico power supply, smoked or generic plexi, wiring harness and control panel.

Plateau
One Plateau Lane
Tracy City, TN 37387
615/592-2000
FAX: 615/592-2010
ANGLE SYSTEM: 19-inch, 24-inch, or 25-inch monitor, predrilled control panel and plexi, accepts any software, works-in-a-drawer.

Video Tech
750 E. Talmadge Ave.
Akron, OH 44310
216/633-3124
FAX: 216/630-3464
UPRIGHT CABINET: black only, removable drawer, 19-inch vertical or horizontal monitor, tilt-up control panel.
COCKTAIL CABINET: 19-inch vertical or horizontal monitor, panel for track ball or joystick.
COUNTERTOP: 13-inch monitor; made to specifications.

Additional cabinet manufacturers

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Three Sussex St.
Kenner, LA 70062
504/469-7761

Amazing Games
10150 S.W. Nimbus #E-4
Tigard, OR 97223
503/620-9493
FAX: 503/624-1627

A.S.C. Corp.
P.O.Box 25306
Cincinnati, OH 45225
513/542-1000
FAX: 513/542-1002

D & D
24 Stafford Ct.
Cranston, RI 02929
401/463-5494
FAX: 401/463-6673

Decar Corp.
96 W. Moreland
Addition, IL 60101
708/543-8050
FAX: 708/543-5256

Maximum Marketing
597 E. Crosstimbers
Houston, TX 77022
713/695-4220
FAX: 713/695-1145

Pars Electronics
10535 Monroe Rd. North
Matthews, NC 28105
704/845-1945

S & P Services
1837 W. Commonwealth
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Question:

How do you handle conversions?

A **Frank Seninsky**
Alpha-Omega Amusements
Edison, N.J.

First of all, we handle them ourselves. Before buying the kit, we put a lot of research into it. After choosing the kit we do about 10 conversions at a time; it's cheaper that way.

We try to cover all the bases when choosing a kit. We find a game that isn't earning well but is housed in a cabinet that would make a nice presentation for another kit. Ease of wiring is a consideration; which would be the easiest for the technician to convert? Also, we try to pick a game where the board will have re-sale value.

Once we've chosen the game, a technician will go in and do the conversion. It used to take four hours, but we've cut the time down to two or three. Then someone else takes over and cleans up the outside of the cabinet. We use spatter paint rather than formica. It's easier, cheaper, and looks almost as good as formica. As I said, we do about 10 conversions at a time in an assembly-line process. There's a quality control checklist we follow to make sure everything is done correctly.

A **Robert Herman**
Ace Amusement Inc.
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Mine is predominantly a bar route, so I don't operate that many kits. I rely on my distributor to do game conversions, though. I'm depending on him to give me either a good, clean cabinet or a new one. This arrangement has worked for me thus far.

Because I go for a new cabinet or one that's shining clean, I try to get a higher return from my location owners. To me, going to the trouble of insisting on top-quality cabinets entitles me to turn around and ask more from the locations. My expenses are higher; therefore, I expect reciprocal consideration from them.

A **Garland Garrett Jr.**
Cape Fear Music Co.
Wilmington, N.C.

We do our own conversions, for the most part. We've bought kits from distributors that have already been converted, but that's a rarity. Two to four people are on hand to do our conversions. The decals are changed and formica is added to the side if need be.

We've tried a couple of cabinet systems, the ones with the removable drawers. One or two of them have the jumbo, 25-inch monitor that do well in arcades. Over time, we've sampled all of the different ways to convert a kit. The big percentage of our conversions, though, are kits that we place inside of old dedicated cabinets.

A **Mark Pizante**
Solano Vending Co.
Fairfield, Calif.

We do all of our conversions in-house. The majority of the time we use Dynamo's system cabinet. The other 20 percent are kits placed in older cabinets that we have on-hand.

We like system cabinets for the convenience they give us. They cost between $900 and $1,000, but they are much easier for converting kits and come with a new monitor and power supply. Say you buy a used cabinet for around $450. Then you get an awful screen that's been burned-out, so tack on another $200 for a monitor. Throw in a new power supply, and before you know it, you've spent almost the same as a new system cabinet. Plus we can put a kit in a system cabinet in half the time.

Another good thing about these cabinets is that they give the appearance of a brand new dedicated game. When you try to do a conversion in an old cabinet that's been cleaned up, it's hard to convince the location owner that he's getting a new game. And as I said, you aren't out much more money with a system cabinet. □

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TAKE OUT THE OLD — BRING IN THE NEW!

Data East, ABC bring Monday Night Football to New Orleans

What was the hottest tour of 1989? The 25th anniversary reunion tour of the rock band The Who? Or maybe the Rolling Stones' "Steel Wheels" tour, with Mick Jagger prancing around on a glacier-sized stage? Votes could be cast for both, but the ballot might also include the 20th anniversary tour of an American sports classic, Monday Night Football.

The 11-city tour, sponsored by Epson America Inc., consisted of a series of lunch celebrations to toast the show's milestone. It culminated in New Orleans on Dec. 18 for the game between the New Orleans Saints and the Philadelphia Eagles. (By the way, the Saints won 30-20. Who 'dat say gonna beat 'dem Saints!)

Of course, the festivities would've been incomplete without a few *Monday Night Football* pinball machines from Data East. The hit pin has been featured in the introduction to each telecast, along with Hank Williams Jr. romping through "All My Rowdy Friends."

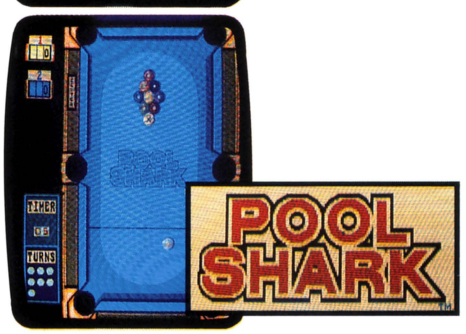
Game designer Joe Kaminkow was on hand for the bash, demonstrating the pin to eager guests. Frank Gifford took time out to brush up on his pinball skills; he might be challenged in the future by fellow announcers Al Michaels and Dan Dierdorf, who, like Gifford, are proud possessors of *MNF* games for their homes.

Another interested pinball combatant was former Los Angeles Ram defensive end David "Deacon" Jones, a member of

The broadcasting team of Gifford, Michaels (c), and Dierdorf amused the crowd with their NFL opinions and anecdotes.

Data East's Joe Kaminkow (l) with ABC broadcaster and NFL Hall-of-Famer Frank Gifford.

How to fit a bowling alley, a pool table and a miniature golf course into one small space!



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"Deacon" Jones approaches *Monday Night Football* with the same fervor as he did for chasing NFL quarterbacks.

the vaunted "Fearsome Foursome" defensive line. Deacon enjoyed the game but had one question for Kaminkow: "When are you going to design a Deacon Jones pinball?" Like a politician cornered with a tough question, Kaminkow diplomatically responded, "Maybe sometime in the future." It's smart to keep large football players happy.

Mingling among the Hyatt Hotel throng were ABC sports personnel, Epson America officials, local celebrities, members of the media, local civic and business leaders, and former NFL stars. In addition to Gifford and Jones, other players included Jim Taylor, Archie Manning, Danny Abramowicz, Jerry Stovall, Steve Stonebreaker, Derland Moore, and Elois Grooms.

The area reserved for the cocktail party was decorated with Christmas trees, mock scoreboards and football turf, balloons, posters, and a 10 x 16 ft. assemblage made of Monday Night Football memorabilia. This work of art included items from every NFL team, as well as such unusual items as Dierdorf's specially designed helmet to protect a broken jaw. The cocktail party also afforded guests photo opportunities with members of the Saints' cheerleading squad and life-size caricatures of the broadcasting trio.

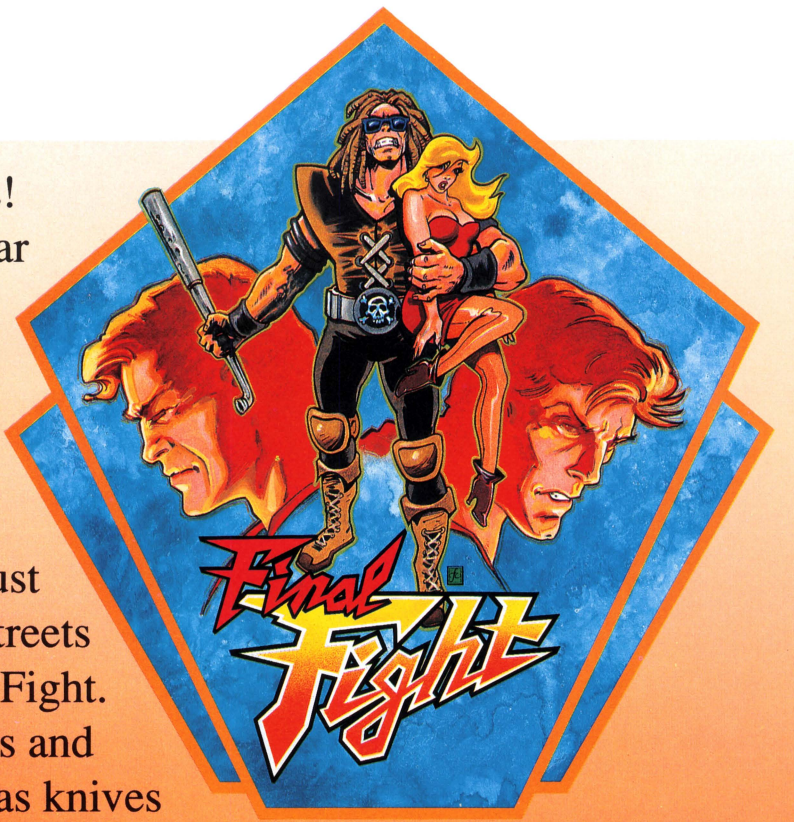
The luncheon itself featured a visit from Gifford, Michaels, and Dierdorf, who talked about the night's game and fielded questions from the audience concerning assorted NFL issues. Attendees were also treated to film clips from Monday Night Football's glorious past, shown on two massive screens. In addition to the great plays, the footage contained banter from the notorious Howard Cosell and singing from "Danderoo" Don Meredith ("Turn out the lights, the party's over .....").

"It must give you a good feeling." Kaminkow was told, "to see so many people enjoying a game you designed." "It sure does," he said with a smile, "it sure does." The same sense of accomplishment is likely shared among those responsible for ABC Monday Night Football, which has been entertaining a football-hungry country for 20 long seasons. □

Poor Joe had to have his arm twisted to pose with these Saints cheerleaders.

This melange of Monday Night Football memorabilia was part of the 11-city anniversary tour.

In Final Fight™, They're Serving Cocktails. Molotov Cocktails.



Those creeps! The Mad Gear Gang has kidnapped Haggar's daughter, Jessica. Now, you must head to the streets for the Final Fight. Use your fists and feet, as well as knives and Molotov Cocktails to beat the gang. Trust no one. Even the cops have gone bad!

Players will welcome the return of Haggar, the original Street Fighter

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Belam spans the ocean

R. H. Belam, which recently was sold to a British company, hosted an open house to celebrate its new ownership and new offices. Over 300 operators, factory reps, and news media joined the Belam staff for a grand time.

Belam customers talked with manufacturing representatives and the Belam staff to get a better feel for the future of the coin-op industry. They also took the opportunity to inspect the latest games first shown at AMOA. □

Mark Haim on the intercom announcing prize winners.

Nintendo's Al Stone (r) talks with Horizon's Bill Wolf, a large Play Choice operator.

They came from far and wide. Nick Delessandro (r) of Toronto, Canada, chats with Marc Haim.

Valley's Dave Kristal (r) with Marc Haim.

George Hamilton of Terminal Vending won a trip to London for two.

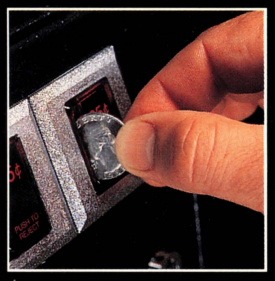
A HOT KIT

GOOD FOR COLD CASH.

THE PLAYCHOICE KIT – MORE PICKS, MORE PLAY

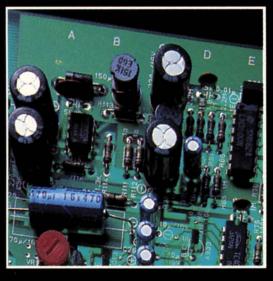
Choice is the name of the game when you want to keep players coming back steadily over a longer period of time. That's just what the PlayChoice™ Kit from Nintendo® is designed to do with your VS. UniSystem.® This hot kit is all you need to give players a choice of five top-playing titles. It's the kind of choice that keeps players coming back again and again.

ALL-STAR LINE UP



Nintendo has a library of over 35 proven titles available with the PlayChoice Kit™ including these hot titles: Mario and his zany friends are back with *Super Mario 3*.™ *Ninja Gaiden*,[1] keeps players jumping with a story line that unfolds in Cinema Display. *Tecmo Bowl*[1] offers non-stop, head-to-head NFL action. *Fester's Quest*[2] brings the Addams family into the space age with out-of-this-world antics. *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*,[3] *Pin Bot*[4] and *Baseball Stars*[5] complete the all-star line up of hits that keep the quarters dropping and the players hopping for hours.

POWERFUL CONNECTION

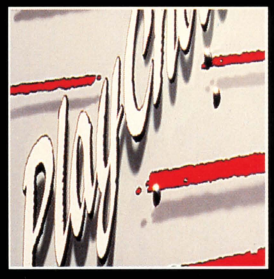


The PlayChoice Kit fits right into your Nintendo VS. UniSystem® giving you a powerful connection to more top titles, more play, more profit! The software is also powered-up to give the graphics more grab, the colors more pop and the punches more pow!

BELLS AND WHISTLES

For all its brains, you'll see that the Nintendo PlayChoice Kit is a beauty, too. We've developed space-age side-panel graphics as well as a high-tech control panel with controllers that look as hot and ahead of the times as the five games inside. Your VS. UniSystem will have the look and feel of a whole new machine. And it will pour on the profit power as never before!

GAME PLAN



Here's the game plan on how to power up for greater profits than ever with the PlayChoice Kit. Get the inside story on the hottest kit in coin-op by going straight to the source. Contact your authorized Nintendo distributor or Nintendo of America Inc. The Nintendo PlayChoice Kit – it's the hot-hot-hottest thing going for cold cash.

[1]™ and © 1989 Tecmo Co. Ltd., [2] © 1989 Sun Corporation of America. Characters licensed from Barbare Artists Inc. Television Character rights licensed from Orion® Television Inc. [3] Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles ® and © Mirage Studios, USA. Trademark use granted to Konami under license from Mirage Studios Inc. ™ & © 1989 Konami Industry Co. Ltd. [4] ™ & ® 1986 Williams Electronic Games Inc. © Rare Ltd. [5] ™ & © 1989 SNK Corporation of America.

All titles are subject to location testing.

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Roger Sharpe

Getting "cornered"

Critic's Corner retrospective, Part II

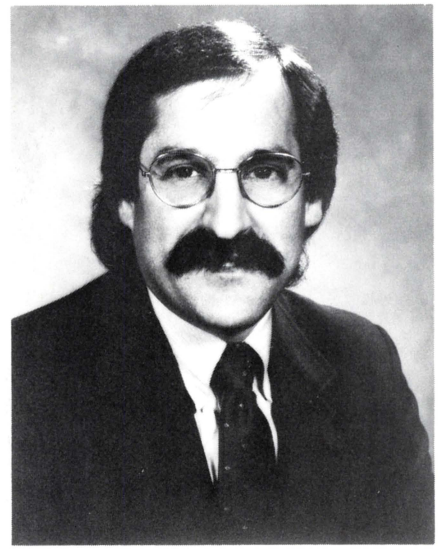
After reviewing an untold number of past columns, I have the distinct feeling that perhaps this feature, Critic's Corner Part II, is not so much a labor of love as a labor of lunacy. Trying to recompile over 430 game reviews is a bit insane. I have become fascinated by all those #### ratings and whether they have stood the test of time. Hindsight is cruel, but let's travel the game critic's road anyway.

Besides being a forum for my regular commentary and observations regarding the general state-of-health of the industry, I hope Critic's Corner established a greater awareness of the various product that came and went over the years. From the very first game ever reviewed in July 1976 (Gottlieb's *Buccaneer*, *Ship Ahoy* add-a-ball version) to the last game (Gottlieb/Premier's *Victory*) in February 1988, the sole purpose of the column was to give a perspective and a game analysis, along with play features and action, to help prospective buyers make informed purchasing decisions.

As for the use of ratings, I don't know if they were ever taken in the same way they were given. From an excellent game (####) down to a fair game (#), the purpose was not to pit one manufacturer against another but rather to measure the efforts of individual companies.

In the first five years of Critic's Corner, the hit parade of games I reviewed reads like a collector's dream: from Bally, *Captain Fantastic, Eight Ball, Playboy,* and *Space Invaders*; from Williams, *Flash* and *Firepower*; and from Stern, *Meteor*. All of these games received a rating of #### in Critic's Corner.

Here's a blow-by-blow, or year-by-year description of pinball progress:



Roger Sharpe

"The sole purpose of the column was to give a perspective and a game analysis, along with play features and game action, to help prospective buyers make informed purchasing decisions."

1976

In 1976, I had the chance to review 18 games over six months, from both domestic and foreign companies. The models that received ####s were: Bally's *Captain Fantastic* and Chicago Coin's *Sound Stage*.

The average rating computed on the values given all the machines was 3.12 (or a little more than ###). As for how the companies did, Bally was on top with an average rating of 3.3, Chicago Coin had 3.25, and both Gottlieb and Williams averaged 3.0.

1977

A total of 39 games were reviewed in 1977 when pinball was enjoying a measure of success and rebirth; the average rating was 3.06. Nine games (or 23 percent) received ####s, including Sonic's *Prospector*, Gottlieb's *Target Alpha, Jack's Open, Bronco, Team One, Jet Spin,* and *Jungle Queen*; and Bally's *Evel Kneivel* and *Eight Ball*.

The top four companies for the year, according to the averaged ratings, were: Gottlieb, 3.70; Sonic, 3.3; Bally, 3.25; and Playmatic, 3.0.

1978

In 1978, with domestic manufacturers getting more entrenched in solid-state electronics, there was a dramatic shift regarding the viability and competitiveness of the imports. A toughening of the ratings was reflected in the 2.91 yearly average for all 44 models that hit the street.

This time, only six games (or 14 percent) received ####s, including Stern's *Stingray*; Williams' *Contact*; Bally's *Power Play*; and Gottlieb's *Cleopatra, Sinbad*, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. The company ratings were something of a dogfight: Bally, 3.3; Stern, 3.29; Williams, 3.18; and Gottlieb, 3.17.

1979

There were probably more solid games produced in 1979 than in any year since. In many ways pinball began its last moments

in the sun. The year brought us 41 different models and an average rating for all the machines of 3.20, which included a whopping 15 ####s.

Obviously, other players and I were enjoying what we were playing given this lineup: Williams' *Flash, Pokerino* and *Stellar Wars*; Bally's *Harlem Globetrotters, Kiss, Playboy, Supersonic*, and *Paragon*; Gottlieb's *Genie, Countdown*, and *Charlie's Angels*; Stern's *Meteor, Hot Hand*, and *Magic*; and Atari's *Superman*, which proved to be too little, too late for the company and its venture into pinball.

There was a shift in the top four rated companies in 1979. Stern was first with 3.9; Williams had 3.75; Bally was third at 3.74; and Gottlieb was fourth at 3.4.

1980

A pronounced change in the fortunes of pinball occurred in 1980, resulting in a rise for video and a plateau effect for pinball games in terms of innovation and excitement. Thirty-four models were produced that year. Average ratings were down to a new low of 2.90 with only four machines (or just 12 percent) getting ####s.

What were the memorable games of the year? Williams' *Firepower* for one; Bally's *Space Invaders;* and Stern's *Big Game* and *Flight 2000*. The manufacturer ratings stacked up this way: Williams, 3.4; Stern, 3.34; Bally, 2.67; and Gottlieb, 2.58.

1981

Early 1981 brought another 24 games to market with an average rating of 3.05. Seven games garnered ####s: Williams' *Alien Poker* and *Black Knight;* Bally's *Xenon* and *Flash Gordon;* Stern's *Lightning* and *Free Fall*; and Gottlieb's *Mars*.

That brings us up to eight years ago and a microcosm of what was to take place in the industry in rapid fashion. Pinball was entering a downward spiral, with video taking on a larger share of the player market in the world of coin-op and later in the home.

Some personal highlights included the unveiling of the first talking pinballs at the 1979 AMOA Expo with Williams' *Gorgar* and Bally's *Kiss*. The prediction was: "by 1980 everything will talk." This forecast was not far off the mark.

By December 1980 I was lamenting pinball's fall from grace and video's rapid ascent. By February 1981 I could see hope with the introduction of double-level playfields and the release of Williams' *Black Knight*, which got the first of only three ####+s I would ever issue. The others were Centuri/Konami's *Track and Field* in March 1984 and Williams' *High Speed* in June 1986.

Gottlieb's *Buccaneer* (1977), the first game reviewed in Critic's Corner.

"The hit parade of pinball games from 1977-1980 reads like a collector's dream."

1982

In June 1982, Critic's Corner underwent a dramatic shift as I reviewed my first video game. For six years I remained faithful to pinball. It became obvious that times were changing, that the column had to reflect the growing sentiment of the industry and reflect what the manufacturers were building. One month later I wrote my first all-video column and began to mix and match the latest releases whether they were novelty games, videos, pinballs, or any other newcomers.

The ####s in 1982 were a hodgepodge of true hits and misses. Some games were given more credit for concept than execution. The list of winners was rather interesting: Bally's *Vector, Rapid Fire* and *Tron*; Gottlieb's *Devil Dare* and *Caveman*; Nintendo's *Donkey Kong Junior*; Sega's *Zaxxon* and *Subroc 3-D*; and Williams' *Hyperball, Robotron 2084* and *Joust*.

1983-1988

By 1983, Critic's Corner's best ####s had a decidedly video slant, with the winners being Atari's *Xevious* and *Star Wars*; Centuri's *Time Pilot* and *Gyruss*; Cinematronics' *Dragon's Lair*; Gottlieb's *Q*bert;* ICE's *Chexx;* Sega's *Champion Baseball;* and Williams' *Defender* pinball.

The number of columns decreased in 1984, but not without highlighting the bright spots provided by Atari's *Crystal Castles;* Bally's *Kings of Steel; Centuri/Konami's Track and Field* (with one of those rare ####+ ratings); Coin-It/Monroe Distributing's *Birdie King II;* Mylstar's *M.A.C.H. 3;* Nintendo's *Punch Out!!* and *VS. Tennis;* and Williams' *Firepower II, Star Rider* and *Lasercue*.

In 1985, Critic's Corner columns began to diminish more remarkably than before. The ####s were awarded that year to Atari's *Marble Madness* and *Paperboy*, Bally/Midway's *Demolition Derby*; Data East's *Karate Champ*; RDI's *Thayer's Quest*; and Williams' *Space Shuttle*.

The chart toppers were fewer in number in 1986, with the best efforts seen in Atari's *Gauntlet* and *720 Degrees*; Sega's *Out Run*; and Williams' *High Speed* (recipient of the last ####+) and *Pin-Bot*. The year 1987 was a lost cause in terms of columns and no ####s appeared. My token appearance in 1988 did result in the final ####s awarded to Atari's *Xybots*, Leland's *Quarterback*, and Taito's *Operation Wolf*.

And so it went for 12 long and enjoyable years of game reviews. I did try to be impartial and listen not just to folks within the industry (such as operators, distributors, and manufacturers), but also to players. I remember how many hours and dollars went into playing the games, traveling to

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Victory, a Gottlieb game produced by Premier Technology, was one of the games reviewed in the last column (February 1988).

"There were probably more solid games produced in 1979 than in any year since."

distant spots to see new equipment, and generally attempting to stay current with everything that streamed forth. More importantly, I stayed in touch with the players and noted their comments and observations.

Critic's Corner stands as a testament to a voice that spoke from the player's point of view; from someone who long felt himself the closest to the inside an outsider could get. I persevered when some probably felt I would go back to what my life had been before coin-op. But the passion never left. It remains as fervent as ever. Ralph Lally game me the chance to be the first "voice of the consumer."

I thank the folks at Play Meter for their dedication and patience when columns came in late or much too lengthy. To this stellar trade publication I wish only success for the next 15 years and many more beyond. And for this writer, as a final recap and closing, I wish one and all to be well and prosper. □

Editor's Note: Play Meter considers itself fortunate to count Roger Sharpe among its friends and contributing writers over the past 15 years. We appreciate his input and sincere love of the industry we all serve.

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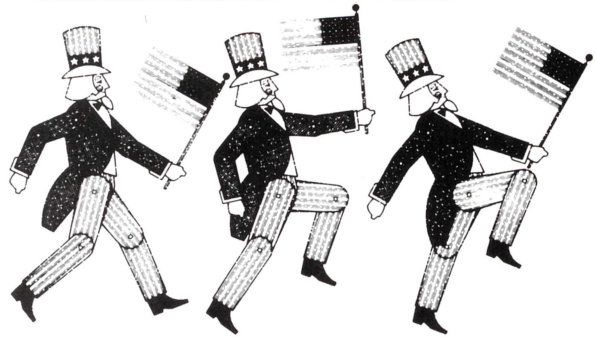

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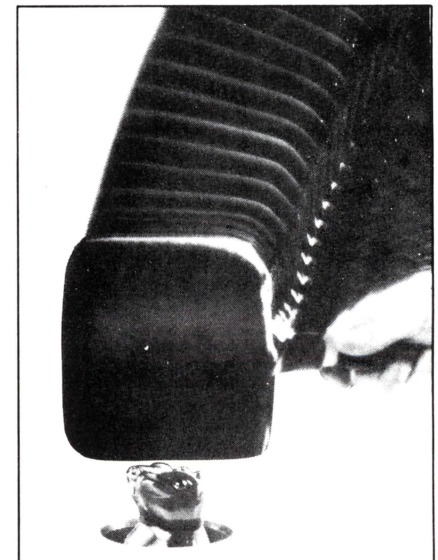

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Christopher Caire

Paul Spiegel

What's the best location for an arcade? An enclosed shopping mall, you say? Wrong, contends Paul Spiegel; bowling centers are hidden gems being overlooked by today's operators. Spiegel is one of the principal owners of Active West, based in Los Angeles. There are 24 of these bowling centers dotted throughout California; most of them are in Southern California. In addition to owning the centers, Spiegel operates the arcades within them. His expertise is such that he often travels across the country, consulting other bowling centers on how to deal with operators and educating operators on how to do business in this unique setting.

Let's begin with some background information? How long have you been in coin-op, and what got you involved?

I've been in coin-op since August 1979, only with Active West. This was right before *Asteroids* came out. My family has been in the bowling business as owners since the '60s. I came into the business full time in 1978 after graduating from college, beginning as a management trainee and then assistant manager. Later on, I helped supervise a group of bowling centers in the Orange County area.

I saw that we really under-utilized these centers as far as ancillary income is concerned. In other words, I realized that arcades could be successfully incorporated into the bowling centers. To begin with, I decided to take on the Orange County area; we had five centers there at the time. The games we had needed to be upgraded, because most of them were old, electromechanical pinball machines. I saw an opportunity to improve a neglected area and greatly increase revenues.

How large are the arcades within the bowling centers?

Some of them have very big arcades, with separate game rooms that hold about 60 pieces. It varies from location to location, with 22 pieces being the average. In some locations, the games are played almost exclusively by the bowlers, while in others it's half-and-half.

What types of equipment are commonly found in an Arcade West arcade?

We don't use redemption equipment—except for the cranes—because we're not staffed for it. We try to use equipment that doesn't require any additional employees other than the people there to staff the bowling center. In the larger game rooms, though, we do have attendants. We operate an average of four pinballs and 18

video games per location.

Bowling centers are a unique operation as far as arcades are concerned. Essentially, you have the same people coming in for 35 consecutive weeks during our winter league season, which runs from September to May. A lot of the same people also come in for the summer. Rotation is very, very important.

dollars spent on equipment, not just the total of the equipment I buy. In other words, I look at the difference between what I buy and what I sell. I tend to sell equipment earlier than most operators.

With so much game rotation, do you prefer kits to larger dedicated pieces?

We went more with kits this past year, but my experience is that dedicated games will give you a real revenue impact. Until quite recently, we hadn't seen any kits that I thought were money-makers. When there weren't any good dedicated games out there—say for a three- or four-month period—we could fill in with kits and avoid losing any revenue. But as far as building revenue to new levels, the good dedicated games are the way to go, like *Super Off-Road, Hard Drivin', Cyberball*, and *Operation Thunderbolt*.

The only kits I've seen recently that are big money-makers are *WWF Super Stars* and *Tetris*. Though it's on a smaller scale, *Tetris* is great for bowling centers. If you have 20 of the normal shoot-'em-up, fighting video games, and then add a *Tetris*, it'll never be number one, but the money it brings in will be new money that hasn't been going to the other machines. The game also appeals to adult players.

"Operators need to learn the particulars of being in a bowling center: more rotation of equipment and better service than they've given in the past."

The bowling centers I've been to have equipment that's extremely outdated, with no real interest in updating.

Exactly. We'll get into that later on. That's a big problem I have with operators, as opposed to a large chain of bowling centers that operates its own games. We're the only ones I know of who do that.

Why don't more bowling centers operate their own equipment? Is it merely a question of size?

First of all, I feel you need to have a minimum of four bowling centers with a critical mass of 40 to 50 machines before you even consider starting your own operation. That's because you need to have enough locations to rotate your equipment through. The same people come to the same location week after week, so you have to have enough different equipment to give them a few new games every four to six weeks. If you only have one or two locations, you've got no place to rotate to or from.

Also, with fewer than 40 to 50 machines in four locations, it doesn't make sense to have a technician handling repairs, cleaning, and maintenance. The maintenance in a bowling center has got to be better than in most other locations, because again, you have the same people coming in week after week. If the equipment looks good and operates correctly, the customer is more likely to play.

I'm very aggressive in the buying and selling of equipment. I worry about the net

What about *Capcom Bowling*?

We haven't operated any.

Really? I'd have thought that game would be a natural in bowling centers.

Our experience has been that bowlers don't play bowling games very much.

I made a commitment at the beginning of 1989 when I saw revenues falling. There were two ways to go. One was to hold the line, not spend a lot of money on equipment, cut costs or hold costs down, and go ahead and let revenues fall. The other way—the way that I chose—was to spend a lot more money on equipment to prop up revenues. I did that, and our revenues held steady in 1989 versus 1988.

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I was very careful with what I bought, buying large quantities of the best games. So there wasn't a lot of money left over to fit in the "B" games. I bought a lot of pinballs and multiple copies of such games as *Cyberball, Arch Rivals*, and *Super Off-Road*. Right now we're getting very heavily into *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*. In our best location, we had one machine earn over $1,500 during the week of Thanksgiving, and that was at one coin per play.

TMNT is a game that typifies my buying strategy. I'd like to think that in the Los Angeles market, I've got tremendous buying power, because we operate so many games. And because of that, hopefully I'm able to get the hot games before a lot of other people. I ordered more *TMNT* than I plan on operating for the long term, figuring that after eight to 10 weeks of operation, I can begin selling them off at almost what I paid for them. Each location will keep at least one, with our 10 or so best ones getting two or more. You get the residual value of the excitement created from having two or three copies in one location. We also pick up a little depreciation and the extra revenue from the machines. They can still be sold off before everyone's orders are filled by the distributors.

What's so unique about this game?

I know of one way where it is atypical to other new games. Typically, when we put in a new game and it brings in, say, $500, about $400 of that was money that used to go into other games. So the incremental contribution of that game would be $100 of the $500. This is something that operators forget to look at. Distributors have tried to tell me, "Look, it brought $500 into the cashbox, and it costs you $3,000 to buy, so it looks like a six-week payback." I told them they were wrong, because it added maybe $100 to the gross; therefore, the payback at that rate would be 30 weeks, not six. It's a fallacy a lot of people follow, forgetting to look only at the incremental contribution of a game.

You mentioned before that you aren't much into redemption. Why the hesitancy?

Spiegel beside some of the equipment at an Active West arcade.

First of all, when you get into redemption, you have to stock a lot of merchandise and hire people to maintain it. We can't do it with the existing people in the centers. Second, we have very few locations that physically have the space for that stuff. Also, my feeling is that after a while, when you add too many things, the bowlers begin to complain that the place is no longer a bowling center. It becomes a carnival atmosphere to them and builds resentment. At some point, enough is enough; you're only diluting yourself.

However, we do aggressively market our crane machines. That's the only area where we utilize an outside operator. We tried operating on our own, and I found myself going crazy trying to keep them properly stocked. Again, as with the games, the same people coming in week after week want to see new product. Our crane operators are fabulous in constantly rotating their stock, coming in with new items, and implementing a trade-up program. They operate three different cranes at three different prices: 25-cent play, 50-cent play, and dollar-play. All have different kinds of prizes; it's mostly plush, but there are other things like mugs, wallets, sunglasses, race cars, and so on.

The one thing I feel most operators fail to grasp about bowling centers is the repeat clientele. It's not like a convenience store or free-standing arcade. In bowling centers, things have to always look fresh. As I've gone around the country consulting bowling centers on how to maximize their profits, I see operators who've left the same equipment in there for five months at a time. The operator is happy with the money he's making from this equipment, but he's not necessarily interested in maximizing the revenue that the bowling center is going to make.

Speaking of your consulting work, do you advise most bowling center owners to operate their own equipment or bring in an outside operator?

It depends on their operation. Again, if they've got enough centers, then the next question is do they want to spend the money to start operating their own machines. Starting with 50 games, your talking about in the neighborhood of $100,000 or more. That's a big outlay of cash. Besides that, they have to set up the technicians and someone to oversee the operation, which involves a fair amount of training. All of these things scare some people off.

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Regardless, I've yet to see a bowling center chain, one that's chosen to remain with their operator, who couldn't greatly increase revenue simply by educating him. That operator needs to learn the particulars of being in a bowling center: more rotation of equipment and better service than they've given in the past.

What special service attention do bowling centers require?

I believe bowling centers with 10 or more games need someone in there to clean them and make the necessary adjustments at least three times a week. I advise the bowling centers to insist upon at least that level of service.

We're talking about locations where an average game will be played approximately 400 times a week. The most popular games are played much more often than that. Assuming everything needs to be cleaned and adjusted every two weeks, especially the pinball machines, it requires a minimum of three visits a week.

The other key for bowling centers is preventive maintenance. Let's say someone is playing *Cyberball* and the joystick doesn't move to the right, meaning the character on the screen doesn't move right, either. A lot of times that game player is not going to report the problem to anyone, and revenue can fall without anyone knowing there's something wrong with the game. Someone needs to get in there once or twice a week to make sure everything is working right. This is the level of service that I demand from our people, and it's a big reason that we're successful, I feel.

So to sum it up, you would advise bowling center owners who aren't quite large enough to go with operators, rather than trying to manage a game room themselves.

Right. Those who are with operators need to learn what it takes to maximize their revenue. But I've got a big problem with most operators, who I feel have a conflict of interest. To begin with, operators are concerned with maximizing their profits, which does not necessarily mean maximizing the revenue coming into the bowling center. Many of them feel they can make a bigger bottom line by spending less money on equipment and maintenance, while at the same time accepting a lower level of revenue. That's in the best interest of the operator, perhaps, but not in the best interest of the bowling center.

Also, most operators who operate in bowling centers also do business with convenience stores. Therefore, they aren't going to spend a lot of money on the very big, expensive games that do well in bowling centers but can't be rotated in their convenience stores. That's another conflict.

I tell the bowling center operators that they have the best locations there are, because they're being provided a steady stream of customers. The centers deserve the attention that would produce a high level of revenue. These operators have

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seen their revenue falling in convenience stores over the past year, while the bowling centers are still doing well. The revenue coming into the bowling center is helping the operator prop up his convenience stores as he waits for a turnaround. I advise the bowling proprietors that they have the strong locations; they deserve the best equipment before the convenience stores. The proprietors are in a position to demand much better equipment than they've been getting, in most cases.

Another conflict I see is that many operators are also distributors. What winds up on their game routes, many times, is the equipment they cannot sell. Although I understand his side of it as a necessary way of doing business, it isn't fair for the distributor/operator to expect the bowling center owner to pay several hundred dollars a week to keep the distributorship going. This is a great benefit for their distributorship, but it doesn't do very much for the location—especially a bowling center.

Are the bowlers a fairly sophisticated group in terms of being aware of the latest games?

It's not so much that they know what the hottest games are. They know what equipment is new to the center, as opposed to what was there last week. I buy only the best games out there. I'd rather buy 20 *TMNT* than 10 of them and 10 of something else.

Let's talk more about your consulting work. Have you done this for very long?

It's something that I've done a lot more of recently, especially with the bowling center chains. The lineage, or the number of games bowled, has been dropping in the bowling industry. Many more bowling proprietors are looking at the necessity of bringing in more revenue from the ancillary operations: snack bars, vending, and games.

As far as I'm concerned, bringing in a lot more revenue from the games is the easiest thing to do. All they have to do to get started is have a conversation with their operator, explaining what it's going to take to stay in that location: better service and better games. This is all with the understanding that the operator needs to make a buck, too. What I try to do is educate the operator as to the particulars of operating in a bowling center, as opposed to any other location.

Are you and your consulting work well-known across the country?

"The average bowler is younger, wealthier, and better-educated than the typical American."

I'm fairly well known with the chains of bowling centers. For several years now, I've been providing reports at the Multi-Unit Bowling Information Group (MUBIG) meetings. This group consists of representatives from most of the large bowling center chains; they meet three or four times a year. For several years I've provided at least a list of the hottest games. At the more recent meetings, I've addressed them and given them clues on how to increase their revenue, either with an operator or operating their own games.

These people have begun to seek me out, to come look at their operations and advise them which route to take. I do a fair amount of traveling around the country to make these evaluations. Then I either deal with the operator or work on training the chain's personnel to operate their own equipment. I also provide ongoing management from here in California. I get their revenue figures and advise them on what to buy or sell and help them find people to sell games to.

What advice would you give an operator who wants to get into a bowling center? What should he know?

First of all, he should understand the bowling business and the concerns of the bowling proprietor. The bowling proprietor does not want something where he has to pay a lot of attention to the operation. He wants something that will run itself. So the game operator has to have someone going into the center looking for trouble—looking for what is wrong with the machines—rather than sitting back waiting for a phone call.

Second, the games should look cleaner and work better than anyone else's games. Third, and most importantly, there must be frequent rotations of good equipment, not a rehash of the old equipment. I buy a lot more equipment new and sell it while it's still decent. I don't wait for things to get down to near zero revenue before selling. This allows you to keep a greater number of good games flowing through the operation. Buy and sell lots of equipment; don't wait for it to get stale.

What's the common commission arrangement for operators in bowling centers?

For most bowling centers, it's 50-50; the better ones can command 55 or 60 percent. But I do advise the bowling center proprietors to leave enough room in there for the game operator to make money. There's plenty of money to be made for both proprietor and operator, as long as there is an understanding as to how the other side works.

Are most of your games set on 25-cent play?

Yes. The more expensive games that bring in more incremental revenue are priced higher, like *Hard Drivin'*. Going to two coins a play, even on the better games, usually results in about the same revenue but half the number of plays. If I'm going to bring in $200 on a machine, I'd rather it be on 800 plays than 400 plays. I prefer giving people more for their money and having them leave happy.

We operate on tokens. I've found that people spend their money a dollar at a time with tokens. They come in saying, "I've got $2 to spend," as opposed to saying, "I'm going to play eight games."

So you aren't in favor of 50-cent pricing across the board?

I think that when the time comes to go to 50-cent play, we will see a relatively small increase in revenue. People will almost cut in half the number of games they play. Again, I feel people come in with a certain amount of money to spend, as opposed to deciding on a certain number of plays.

I see some possibility of getting more

money out of people in the future, but when you're talking coin-op, you're still talking about people spending X-number of dollars. I hope I'm wrong. At least with tokens, you have the option of going three tokens for a dollar or six tokens for a dollar, with two tokens per play, for example. Despite this flexibility, we've seen a lot of resistance to price increases.

"When the time comes to go to 50-cent pricing, I think people will almost cut in half the number of games they play."

Are tokens the norm for bowling centers?

No, but they should be, because they are a great promotional tool. You can target an audience extremely well with tokens. Say you've got a night where the adults don't play games; you can give everyone a free token that night. If you give them a quarter, most will walk out with a quarter in their pocket.

Another advantage to operating tokens is that all of the cash is now sitting in the dollar bill changer rather than 20 or 30 machines. It's much easier to collect and get the money in the bank more often. When you're our size, getting the money to the bank four or five days earlier can make a difference. Also, there is less of a security problem with tokens, because there is less incentive to break into the machines.

What's the most common age group found in bowling centers?

I would say the 14-25 category constitutes the largest segment of game players. As far as the bowlers themselves, most are in the 25-45 age group.

Those numbers would give the appearance, then, that most of your bowlers aren't game players.

The people who are, say, 35 years old now were in their mid-'20s when *Pac-Man* hit. They are used to playing video games; it's much more acceptable now for people in that age group. Also, programs such as "bumper bowling"—where we put inflatable bumpers in the gutters so kids can't roll gutter balls—bring more youngsters into the bowling centers. And we aggressively market birthday parties, which bring a lot of parents and their kids in. All of this tends to get our bowlers more involved in playing the games.

What are the demographics associated with bowling?

The average bowler is younger, wealthier, and better- educated than the typical American.

Really? I had this image of the blue collar worker, the Archie Bunkers or Ralph Kramdens.

Yes, that unfortunately is the image bowling has had. But the demographics show otherwise. It's much less a blue collar activity than it used to be.

Are there any final points you'd like to make?

The main point I'd like to stress is that bowling centers are the best locations there are, by and large. There are some free-standing arcades and other locations that do very well. But if you had to pick a group of locations, you wouldn't do better than bowling centers—if they are marketed properly.

I think properly operating in bowling centers is one area that's been overlooked by bowling proprietors and game operators for a long time. Imagine being able to tell a game operator, "I've got an average bowling center; I'm going to bring in 2,000 people a week who are looking to spend money having fun. It's going to be the same people every week for 35 weeks." That's a fabulous opportunity for someone who'll take the time to think about how to operate properly. But he can't approach it the same way he would a convenience store. □

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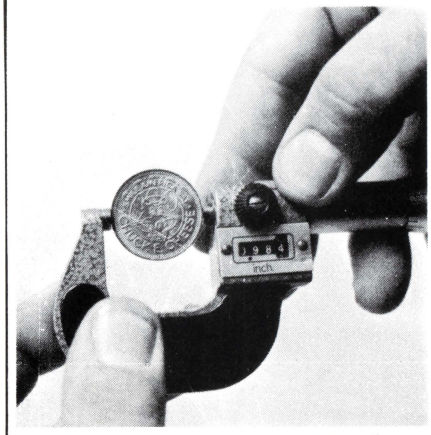

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It's tax season again... and the IRS wolf is at your door!

The best way to prevent being caught with your 1099s out of order is to bolster yourself with correct information on such all-important tax issues. Our popular Tax Tips column has been expanded this month in order to provide more in-depth tax coverage just about the time you must caucus with your accountant and pay up to Uncle Sam.

Here's a preview of what you'll find in the following pages: Jeff Rosenthal's advice on entertainment, travel and travel reimbursement, equipment trading, disaster relief, shareholder loans, and those worrisome 1099s; also Irving Blackman's common sense look at S corporations (termed "a friend for life and beyond"), incorrect tax estimates that can void your extension, stock bonuses for children-employees, and the repeal of Tax Section 89 (hats off to the House and Senate on this one!).

Painful as it may be, taxes and the ever-changing tax structure demand that we all keep up-to-date on every new twist the government throws our way under the guise of taxes. Good luck on your returns this year. May all your depreciation claims be justified, all your travel and entertainment expenses be allowed, and all your deductions be big ones. □

Jeffrey Rosenthal, EA.

Things to know as the tax season rolls around

For the overwhelming majority of us, the Tax Reform Act of 1986 merely exchanged one set of arbitrary rules for another. The major topics of interest for amusement/vending operators are depreciation, travel and entertainment, auto expense, 1099s, and tax-free exchanges.

First on my list is the issuance of 1099s. Many employers have been paying route men, collectors, and the like net money and issuing 1099s to these "employees" under the heading "non-employee compensation." This practice is now under scrutiny by both the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and issuers providing workmen's compensation and state-mandated disability insurance.

It is the position of the IRS that most of these situations are improperly classified. The IRS feels that most of the employers who use "independent contractors" are abusing the law. At issue from the government's point-of-view is that employers/employees each pay 7.51 percent in Social Security (FICA), totaling 15.02 percent. A self-employed independent contractor only pays 13.02 percent; that two-percent difference is considerable, the IRS believes.

If you control the work hours, total work conditions, clientele, and other similar factors, they are employees and you are an employer, by definition. Failure to pay FICA money to the government, or "trust fund money," is a criminal offense.

For an independent contractor to be truly independent, the government is looking for this person to be holding himself out as a true business. I'm referring to things like an ad and/or listing in the business phone book, separate books and records, etc., showing that these contractors work independently for more than one master. Independent contractors usually set their own work hours and work conditions.

Otherwise, the same general conditions apply if you are a non-corporation paid more than $600 in a calendar year: you must issue a 1099 Misc.(Miscellaneous) form.

A hot subject for the IRS is the issuance of 1099s to stops (again, those non-corporate accounts that you pay more than $600 a year). Failure to issue a 1099 can cost you $25 per 1099 for federal, $25 for most states, and an additional $25 if you were required to send the data to the IRS by computer.

Entertainment

Entertainment and meal expenses are generally deductible if you can show that the expenses are: 1) directly related to the active conduct of your trade or business; or 2) associated with the active conduct of your trade or business (in this case, the meal or entertainment must directly precede or follow a substantial business discussion); or 3) a business gift such as a meal, which is deductible to a maximum of $25 per gift (not subject to limitation).

Thanks to the Tax Reform Act of 1986, these meal and entertainment expenses must be reduced by 20 percent. This is true even for meals incurred while you are traveling away from home on business (whether eating alone or with others).

As an employer, if you reimburse employees 100 percent for meals and/or entertainment, you are required to add the 20 percent non-deductible portion on the year-end Form W-2 in Box 10 (wages, tips, and other compensation). You must report these payments on Form W-2 if these payments, plus the employee's wage, total $600 or more in a calendar year. You may report these payments on a separate Form W-2. You *do not* have to withhold income tax (or FICA) from these meal payments.

Travel

The major item of note here is that the standard mileage rate of 1989 is 25.5 cents per mile for vehicles used in your trade or business. This rate applies to the first 15,000 miles; it is 11 cents per mile for all mileage over the first 15,000 and for fully depreciated business vehicles.

There is also a standard meal allowance. Instead of deducting the actual cost of your meals while traveling *away* from home for business, you can deduct $14 a day (without documentation) if you stay in one general area less than 30 days, or $9 a day if your stay is 30 days or more. You must still prove the actual cost of other travel, as well as the time, place, and business purpose of it.

Travel reimbursement

If you are reimbursed for your meal expense while traveling away from home, you may use the standard meal allowance if: 1) you are reimbursed a separate amount of meals instead of receiving a combined allowance for both meals and lodging; 2) you include any reimbursement in your income; 3) you are not required to prove to the payer the actual amount of your meal expenses; and 4) you are *not* related to the payer.

You are considered related to the payer if you are related to any owner who owns more than 10 percent. There are other rules on this subject; consult a competent professional.

If you use the standard meal allowance, you must use it to figure all your deductions for meal expenses during the year, except for reimbursed meal expenses that do not meet the requirements. Use of the standard meal allowance is optional each year.

Equipment trading (non-taxable exchange)

Operators continue to seek new and innovative methods to rotate equipment inventory while keeping the pressure on cash flow at a minimum. One very effective technique is equipment trading. If you trade like-kind equipment, such as a pin for a video, or a business car for a pickup truck or van, the Tax Code will treat such a transaction as a tax-free exchange under Section 1031 of the Internal Revenue Code. If the exchange is not for like-kind property or has you as the recipient of cash, this may be a partially tax-free exchange.

Please consult a competent tax professional on this before you attempt equipment trading; pitfalls and conditions abound. Some of the most famous tax blunders have been due to simply not understanding all of the rules and conditions. The items discussed here are merely to provide you with food for thought.

Disaster relief

With Hurricane Hugo and the recent California earthquake, it is worth reviewing the tax advantages available to disaster victims.

If you or your business sustain a loss from a disaster, and it's within an area determined by the president to warrant federal assistance (under the Disaster Relief Act of 1984), there is a special tax rule that may help cushion your losses. Internal Revenue Code Section 165(1) gives you the option of taking the loss on the tax return for the year in which it actually occurred, *or* on your return for the preceding taxable year.

Since you must, by statute, deduct 10 percent of your income (for individuals) from the actual loss to determine the tax deductible loss, your choice as to which year to use should be determined by the year with the *lowest* income to maximize the allowable deduction. This will result in the highest possible tax refund.

If you elect to take a 1989 disaster loss on your 1988 tax return, you must do so no later than the due date of your 1989 tax return (April 16, 1990, for calendar-year individuals; March 15, 1990, for calendar-year corporations). You may claim the loss by filing an amended 1988 tax return or Form 1045, an application for a tentative refund. Though either way is acceptable, I prefer Form 1045; the IRS

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responds more quickly to it, in my opinion.

An election generally becomes irrevocable 90 days *after* the date the election is made. The alternative is to take a deduction on the current tax return. To claim the loss, you must prepare Form 4684 (casualty and theft losses for individuals) or Form 4797 (supplemental gains and losses for businesses). The forms should be available from your local IRS office. If you sustain the casualty loss personally, it would be added to your itemized deductions.

"Equipment trading is a very effective technique for rotating equipment inventory while keeping cash flow pressure at a minimum."

Your disaster loss first must be reduced by any insurance reimbursement or grant received, then by 10 percent of your adjusted gross income (individuals only), and then by an additional $100 (also individuals only). This does not apply to business property that an individual has sustained damage to. The difference is then added to the rest of your itemized deductions (individuals). [Section 165(c)(3)]

Because of the 10 percent reduction imposed by President Reagan in 1981, losses have to be substantial to get a tax deduction for them. If your loss is so substantial that it exceeds your earned income, it may result in a net operating loss (NOL). If so, your loss may either be brought back three years (in the case of a 1989 NOL, carried back to 1986) or carried forward to the next year(s).

The rules on disaster losses and net operating losses are complex and include many traps. It is prudent to consult a tax professional to make sure you qualify for these tax-saving benefits and avoid pitfalls.

Some random tax notes

No one can question that the sweeping changes brought about by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 were comprehensive. Further, the full impact of the TRA won't be fully known until the audits begin. Here are some points of note:

Medicare tax repealed. The new Medicare tax has been repealed. The law would have added up to $800 in additional taxes to those persons eligible for Medicare.

Child care. If you claim the child care credit, your child must now be under age 13, rather than the previous age of 15. Also, you will have to list the Social Security numbers or employer I.D. numbers of the child care providers.

Personal exemptions. The personal exemption is $2,000 for 1989; it's anticipated to be $2,050 for 1990. As a general rule, the key requirement for claiming someone as a dependent is that the taxpayer must provide more than half of the person's support for 1989. Full-time students can qualify as dependents—regardless of income—if they are under age 24.

Income limits for passive losses removed. Passive loss deductions against passive income will be available regardless of a person's adjusted gross income (AGI), instead of being phased out as AGI exceeds $200,000. This removal of the income limit takes effect in 1990.

Capital gain tax cut? It seems highly likely that Congress will vote to cut the capital gains tax in 1990. Keep an eye on Congress for further developments on the capital gains debate.

Maximum Social Security tax against income increases again. The Social Security tax rate has increased for 1990 to 7.65 percent each for employers and employees on the first $50,400 of wages.

Social Security number for dependents. On your 1989 tax returns, you will have to list Social Security numbers for any dependent who is at least two years old. Failure to do so will result in a penalty. In addition, the exemptions may be disallowed.

Personal interest deductible. The amount of personal interest you can deduct is only 20 percent, down from 40 percent for 1988. Investment interest, subject to limitations, is 100 percent deductible.

Internal Revenue Code Section 89 repealed. Section 89 was an attempt to ensure a fair distribution of health benefits to employees. It was repealed by Congress due to its difficulty of implementation.

Self-employed business people. The 25 percent health insurance deduction for self-employed business people has been extended to September 1990. It was originally scheduled to expire at the end of 1989. This is also available to two-percent S corporation owners.

Kiddie tax alternative. New Form 8814 lets a parent elect to report his or her child's interest and dividends on the parent's tax return. (The child must be under age 14.) If elected, this will eliminate the child from filing and using Form 8615.

For taxpayers in states with an income tax, this method is *not* recommended, since in most cases the children will not have a state tax. If the income is included on the parent's return, it will be subject to state income tax.

Home telephone use for business. The IRS will no longer allow a tax deduction for your basic home telephone bill. All that's allowed are the directly related additional charges over the basic service.

Leasing arrangements and tax-sheltered profits. A Tax Court decision points up how an owner of a closely held company can set up a special tax shelter opportunity: he can lease to the company. If the rent is tied into the gross sales of the company, the owner can effectively get deductible dividends.

An owner wants to take advantage of every opportunity to pay out corporate earnings that are deductible; for example, a bonus earned as a company executive that's keyed into company profits. On the other hand, if the earnings are paid out as dividends, the earnings are taxed twice (C-

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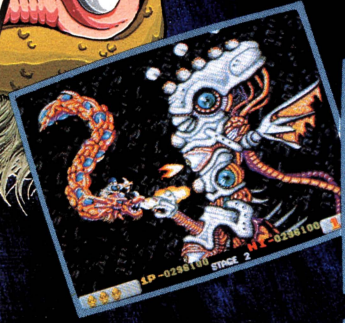

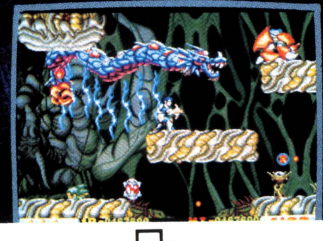

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In this case, the owner used rents instead of bonuses to receive deductible earnings. He had his corporation pay him rent based on a fixed payment plus a percentage of company sales—something very close to a distribution of earnings. Since there is a legitimate business purpose behind the leasing arrangement, the courts have ruled in favor of the taxpayer. [Davis & Sons, Inc., TC Memo 1981-178]

Picking up a big part of a vacation tab. A company is perfectly free to reimburse its executive for actual expenses incurred in business travel. So if an executive can work in a vacation along with a legitimate business trip, the company can, in effect, pick up a portion of his vacation costs. The tax result: such reimbursement is tax-free to the executive and almost fully deductible by the company (80 percent deductible in the case of meals).

Make sure that you record all of your expenses. When you return, account to your company for business-connected expenses. Turn in your diary and receipt (or copies) to whomever okays expense accounts. Show proof of all your expenses. If you own more than 10 percent of the company, you may be called upon at an audit to verify these deductions again.

Suppose you take your spouse along on a business-related trip and your company reimburses you for all costs. Unless your spouse's presence amounts to a business necessity—a very tough requirement to meet—you'll be taxed on what it pays for her expenses. However, the government allows you to not report it on a 50-50 basis. You can simply price the difference in single and double rates. This can still result in very favorable conditions for you.

Tax-free meals. If meals are paid for employees and/or officers, they can be 100 percent deductible. This is provided the meals are "for the convenience of the employer," as required by the tax law, and "for a substantive, non-compensatory business reason of the company." [Mabley, TC Memo 1965-323]

Shareholder loans

We get several calls a month from operators or their accountants, asking for help or more clarification on issues previously articulated here in Play Meter. One such issue is shareholder loans; will they hold up?

Changes in tax law have touched every aspect of business, including shareholder loans. It is now almost impossible to extend interest-free loans from shareholders to a corporation. To begin with, it is without a doubt a firm necessity to document such a transaction properly.

It is not the necessity that the IRS is questioning, but the propriety. Is it really a loan, or is it capitalization of your business? The question and its answer become especially acute in a newly organized business.

This article is a guideline to assist you in discussions with a properly qualified tax advisor. It is not intended to replace competent legal or tax advice.

During normal operations, occasions arise when the shareholder/owner has to lend the business money. This problem is not unique to the vending/amusement industry. It is a bit more acute, since the banks seem to be so enthusiastic in lending operators money. Under these conditions, it is or should be obvious that the money is a bona fide loan, which is expected to be repaid. It is also obviously not intended to be a contribution of capital.

From the point of view of taxes, a loan repayment is not a taxable transaction. As a capital contribution, any cash received by a shareholder is deemed a dividend by the IRS. The cash would then be taxable to the shareholder and not deductible by the corporation.

To preserve the integrity of the loan transaction, proper and very complete documentation is essential. It is first and foremost important to document the intent of the transaction to be deemed a loan. Both form and substance must be documented. And more importantly, without substance, form is moot.

The IRS has also indicated some characteristics necessary to support the decision as to whether a transaction is considered a loan or capital contribution. Among the characteristics are:

1. **The timing of the transaction.** Any transaction at the start-up of the business is likely to be deemed a capital contribution, regardless of what you call it. This is in contrast to a going company that simply has a cash requirement to expand or continue operations. It is certainly a much easier case to defend a loan to a going company than a start-up business.

2. **The specificity and proximate nature of purpose.** The need should be well-defined and documented, with purposes such as working capital or to acquire machinery, autos, or a building. If you would apply the same documentation from your business that your bank would, you would be doing yourself a big favor.

If the loan were made to the company, and the company in turn invested the money, this would indicate that the money was not used to advance the company's principal business. If the money were to be advanced for the purpose of expanding and not to support the regular, everyday operations, arguments could be made on both sides. The IRS would probably call it a capital contribution.

3. **The economic defensibility of the loan.** In other words, can the business repay the loan, and is it financially stable to merit a loan? This is often the most difficult characteristic to prove, but it would really solidify your contention that it is a loan. For example, a letter from a bank that they would have approved your loan under such-and-such conditions.

4. **The secured status of the loan.** Is the loan secured by some real or personal property in the event of default? Here again, apply the same criteria (if possible) that a bank would.

5. **The size of the loan.** The dollar amount of the loan is especially important as it relates to equity interest in the corporation by the shareholders. A situation where each holds 50 percent of the outstanding stock and provides an infusion of cash—contributing equal amounts—would appear to be an equity transaction rather than a loan.

6. **The capital structure of the organization.** The equity position in the corporation is an important characteristic in determining whether a transaction is a capital contribution or a loan. The capitalization should be substantial enough to support the fact that the company was properly capitalized from the beginning. This would support the loan status of the money contributed to the corporation.

If the corporation's capital structure is too "thin," it would not appear to have the ability to repay the loan. In this case, it would be very difficult to convince the IRS that the money was, in fact, a loan and not a capital contribution to the corporation.

7. **Equity participation and management.** If the shareholder infuses cash and, as a result, acquires more rights to participate in the corporation, this will definitely be considered a capital contribution and not a loan.

According to "Prentice Hall Professional Newsletter," when making a loan to your company, keep an eye on the following 13 angles. These are the key factors that the courts look for in determining whether notes or bonds actually represent a debt.

- **The name given to the instrument.** If you receive a stock certificate for the corporation, it indicates that a capital contribution was made. On the other hand, a note is evidence of a debt.
- **Fixed maturity date.** The presence of a fixed maturity date is a highly significant feature of a loan, not a capital contribution.
- **Source of payments.** If the corporation is able to repay the shareholder only out of earnings, the transaction has the appearance of a capital contribution.
- **Right to enforce payment.** If a definite obligation to repay exists, the transaction appears to be a loan. But repayments at the discretion of the corporation indicate a capital contribution.
- **Increase in management.** An increase in your role in managing the corporation, as a result of the advance, would indicate a capital contribution.
- **Status in relation to creditors.** If you are subordinated to the corporation's general creditors, a contribution to capital is indicated.
- **Intent of the parties.** The fact that you personally intended to make a loan will be given some weight, but it won't overcome other objective facts that show a capital contribution.
- **Corporation's capitalization.** If the corporation is underfunded, the advance would appear to be a capital contribution.
- **Identity of debtor and stockholder interest.** Advances made by you in proportion to your stock ownership indicate a capital contribution.
- **Interest payments.** If you do not insist on interest payments, you may appear to be interested more in the future earnings of the corporation. The advance would then appear to be a capital contribution.
- **The corporation's ability to obtain outside financing.** If no outside creditor would have loaned the corporation the money, the advance would appear to be a capital contribution.
- **Use to which the advances are put.** Advances used to acquire capital assets would appear to be capital contributions. But advances used to meet daily operating needs are indicative of a loan.
- **Repayment on the due date.** The failure to repay by a set date, or the failure to demand payment, indicates a capital contribution.

The newsletter goes on to point out that no single factor will save you from having your advance treated as a capital contribution. On the other hand, no one factor will knock you out of the loan category, either. But the more factors you have on your side, the better your chances of coming out on top.

And, of course, there are non-tax considerations. For example, taxes aside, you may want to insist on an increased role in management before you loan money in order to protect your loan. □

Jeffrey Rosenthal is a private practice accountant. He can be contacted at Villa Rose Associates Ltd., 2032 Bath Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11214; (718) 265-1234.

Irving L. Blackman

A friend for life and beyond: the S corporation

One of the most interesting realities of consulting with the owner of a closely held family business is his perception that his succession and tax problems are unique. Sure, most family businesses do have some special problems that require some tailor-made solutions. But in the hard, practical business world, when I question a business owner (let's call him Joe) about succession, he usually comes up with this typical set of objectives:

1. Joe wants to keep control of the business for as long as he lives.

2. Joe wants his son, Joe Jr., who has been active in the business for years, to have control after he is gone.

3. Joe, age 59 (substitute your own age), wants to slow down yet continue to draw income from the business for 10 or 15 years (assuming he lives that long).

4. Joe wants his wife to get income from the business (assuming he dies before she does).

5. Joe wants his children (there are more than just Joe Jr.) to be treated equitably.

Here's a tax transfer plan that can solve all of the above objectives. First, elect S corporation status. Next, recapitalize your company by exchanging your common voting stock for non-voting common (say 9,900 shares) and voting common (say 100 shares).

Let's look at your lifetime scenario. You pay tax on the business's earnings. But now you can take all or part of those earnings any time you please without paying a second tax. And once you actually stop working, you can take those earnings just like a salary—without paying any Social Security tax—and draw Social Security benefits to boot.

Sooner or later, you die. When you do, your wife steps into your shoes—drawing the business earnings. You leave the 100 shares of voting stock to Joe Jr. He now controls the day-to-day operations of the business.

One more trick can help you save estate taxes. During your life, give some of the non-voting common stock to all three of the kids. You can give up to $60,000 ($20,000 per child) in stock value per year to the children. Your wills (both husband's and wife's) should leave non-business assets (like cash, stocks of public companies, etc.) to the non-operating children and the business assets (the balance of the 9,900 non-voting shares) to Joe Jr.

If there are not enough non-business assets to treat the two non-operating children equitably (a common situation), just give them some of the non-voting stock. A buy-sell agreement signed by all of the children stockholders will force Joe Jr. to buy out his siblings after you and your wife pass on. The agreement can be funded by life insurance, or the payout period can be stretched out for seven to 10 years or more, in order not to hurt the cash flow of the business. Where does Joe Jr. get the money? Again, he draws on the S corporation earnings. When everything is done, Joe Jr. has the business and the non-operating kids have cash.

The above is a basic but flexible family transfer plan that can be changed to fit a variety of special circumstances. But remember, a short item like this does not attempt to cover all of the variations, opportunities, or problems. Get an experienced professional to help you.

Bad estimate can void your extension

For millions of Americans, April 15 is the day to file your extension. It's easy; just file Form 4868, Application for Automatic Extension, and you get an automatic four-month extension of time (to Aug. 15) to file your tax return.

Oh yes, the system works. Our office files hundreds of them every year for taxpayer clients. Done right, there are no problems. Can anything go wrong? Yes. But most people don't know what. The fact is, you must pay the "full amount properly estimated as tax" for the year, and any unpaid portion must be sent with the application. This is a clear IRS regulation.

In a recent Tax Court case, the regulation was upheld and the court said that the taxpayer must make a "bona fide and reasonable attempt to locate, gather, and consult information which will enable him to make a proper estimate of his tax liability." Where the taxpayer fails to properly estimate his tax liability, the IRS can completely void the extension and apply penalties based on the April 15 due date.

The facts of the case are interesting. The Crockers filed for an extension for both 1981 and 1982. They underestimated their true tax liabilities for '81 and '82 by $59,000 and $27,000, respectively. The estimated tax liabilities for these years, as shown on the extensions, were only $12,000 and $22,000. The IRS wanted to void the extensions and nail the Crockers for penalties for failure to file a timely return.

The IRS argued that the Crockers were grossly negligent in the preparation of their extension requests. They did not

make a bona fide or reasonable effort to locate or obtain the information necessary for a proper estimation of tax liability. The court agreed (Otis B. Crocker, 92 TC 57).

Be forewarned. Sure, keep filing for your automatic extensions. But make sure you base your estimates on the information available to you when the extension is filed. Also, be realistic. It pays to overestimate for three reasons—interest on any shortage is not deductible, an overpayment can be applied to your estimated tax payment for the next year, and, most of all, you will avoid any possibility of being challenged by the IRS to void your automatic extension.

Giving a stock bonus to your children-employees

If one or more of your children work for your closely held corporation, keep reading. Let's say your daughter, Sue, works for your corporation, Success Co. The business, an S corporation, is worth $1 million. You would like to give Sue 10 percent of the corporation, a $100,000 gift. Such a large gift would have gift-tax consequences. Is there a better way?

For most business owners with this kind of problem, a stock bonus can do some neat tax tricks. Suppose Success Co. were to give Sue a $100,000 bonus—not in cash but in stock of the company. You'll love the tax consequences.

Sue must pay income tax on the $100,000. There's no doubt that you can make a gift to Sue of the cash needed to pay this tax. Where will you get the money? Well, the $100,000 stock bonus is deductible by Success Co. That will reduce the profits and your tax burden. Simply put, Sue pays tax on the $100,000 while you get a deduction (through the S corporation).

Can anything go wrong with this plan to get stock and money out of your business? Yes—two things. First, the IRS may attack by saying that Sue's compensation is unreasonable. This problem is easily solved by paying out the stock bonus over a period of two or more years. Second, the IRS may attack the valuation of the shares. Have a competent business appraiser value the shares issued as a bonus.

One more point. This technique can be used by not only an S corporation but by a regular tax-paying corporation as well.

Congress kills Section 89

It's dead and buried. On Nov. 8, 1989, President Bush signed a bill that included the repeal of Section 89 of the IRS code, which dealt with the discrimination of benefits (health care, etc.) Best of all, none of its overly complex and onerous provisions ever took effect! The effective date of Section 89 was repeatedly delayed.

Hats off to the House and Senate. Business complained and Congress listened. Let this be a continuing lesson to all of us. When you have a tax complaint, take action. Write to the people in Washington who can vote for a change. Also, let your trade association know how you feel so it can go to bat for you and your industry. □

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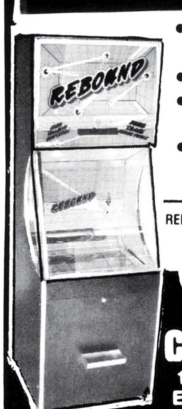

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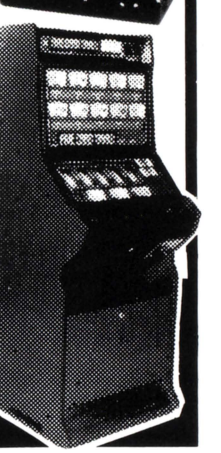

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READER'S RESPONSE

OPERATORS: This column is devoted to you. It is your chance to have your voice heard on the state of the industry. We welcome all complaints, compliments, and comments. We will print your letters as received, when possible. We would appreciate it if you would refrain from sending a scathing letter about a specific manufacturer. Instead, we would like your general observations on the industry. Your name will not be used if you so request. Take a few moments to share your thoughts with the rest of the coin-operated entertainment industry. There is a self-addressed sheet waiting for you to fill out and return to us.

About the equipment poll

The word on the street is that another publication's equipment poll has always been bought off by the manufacturers and that Play Meter used to be accurate with theirs. But now they are bought off, too.

With games like *E.S.W.A.T.* and *Crime Fighters*—only mediocre at the very best and so highly touted in the magazines—it is easy to believe. I don't think you realize how crucial your recommendations are to the small operator and how much respect is lost.

Birmingham, Alabama

Though we don't normally respond to our readers in this column, I feel it is vital to do so now. I assure you that our equipment poll is in no way influenced by any manufacturer. Though I cannot truly speak for our competition, I will say that I would find it hard to believe that they are bought off by manufacturers. Our equipment poll is based solely on responses from operators who take the time to fill out the survey form sent to them or taken from the front of the magazine. The results are tabulated and the equipment poll is printed directly from those results. If you are filling out a survey form, thank you for doing so. If you are not, maybe that is the reason you are not satisfied with the results. We need as much feedback as possible. Every vote counts.

Where are they now?

Whatever happened to the table model manufacturers? Are they totally sleeping or are they totally negligent? Today's tables are antiques.

The industry is finally building quality games. Operators' problems are becoming less! Thanks for listening.

California

Where are we headed?

I have been in this industry a long time and have seen many changes. I was always pretty optimistic and felt that a good change was just around the corner. I don't feel all that optimistic right now. It's the first time that I have actually felt like it was high time to look for another career. Don't get me wrong. I love this industry, but it doesn't love me right now. I am spending more and more on less and less games. By less I mean innovation, quality, and return on investment. I don't know how much longer I can survive on so little. The only salvation right now is pool tables and jukeboxes. If it weren't for them, I would be in even sadder shape.

New York, New York

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AND NOW . . .
A WORD FROM OUR READERS!!!

An operator challenged us to provide space and invite everyone in the coin machine business to write about what is right, wrong, or can be corrected within the industry. OK, here's the space. Now it's up to all of you to fill it with comments on the industry. We will not print your name if you so request, but we will print your comments just as you have them. The operator suggested running the page for three issues, but we will leave it indefinitely if you continue to send your opinions.

California

The Delano Police Department has adopted a "get tough" policy with operators of videos and pins. Police chief Raymond Schartau says his officers will begin enforcing an ordinance that requires licenses for these machines; it's been on the books for the last few years but hasn't been strictly enforced. The police will begin citing operators who don't comply. The offense is considered a misdemeanor and punishable by fine.

"It's an existing ordinance, but there has been no compliance with it," Schartau said. "We've known about it for the past year, but the problem is we didn't know where these businesses were."

The ordinance includes all video games that require coins, slugs, or tokens, as well as pinball machines. It does not include jukeboxes or vending machines. Besides the licensing provisions, the ordinance says that no amusement machine can be located within 1,000 feet of a public school premises.

The license fee is calculated to be eight-tenths of one percent of the annual gross receipts taken in by the machines operated in the city.

Michigan

The city council in Rochester Hills has granted a local theater owner permission to operate six video games, an action that came many months after heated debate over the games' threat to child morality and non-violent behavior.

In May 1989, the council approved an ordinance amendment allowing video games to be placed in theaters. It requires theater owners to first receive a permit from the council. Prior to adoption of the amendment, the ordinance forbade video games on theater premises.

The decision to adopt the ordinance amendment led to complaints from some citizens of Rochester Hills, as well as a few council members. Councilwoman Carol Glass said she'd read a study suggesting that video games could cause violence in children. Others were certain that video games in theaters would make the businesses teen hangouts.

However, since that time, four games were installed at another theater with no harmful effects. Maybe that's why the council issued a permit for six games to the most recent petitioner (with no brouhaha).

Montana

Video poker and keno machines may be unwelcome in most states, but to officials in Montana, they represent a growing source of much-needed dollars. The tax revenue earmarked for cities, counties, and the general fund is increasing, with no end in sight.

According to Bob Robinson, administrator of the state Gambling Control Division, the revenue from this 15 percent gambling net income tax has risen about 10 percent every quarter and shows no sign of leveling off. It was instituted in July 1987.

Two-thirds of the tax money is distributed to towns, cities, and counties where the current 8,822 licensed machines are located. The remaining one-third goes to the state general fund. In fiscal 1988, the first year of the new tax, the state collected $10.5 million. Fiscal year 1989 ended on June 30; the state reeled in about $13.3 million during this period. First-quarter fiscal 1990 revenue reflects an ever-upward spiral.

"There's a growth in the number of machines that were licensed," Robinson said. "And they're getting a little bit more popular all the time."

New Jersey

Eight distributors and an arcade owner in Passaic have filed suit against the city, asking that it reverse a moratorium preventing them from installing new equipment. The plaintiffs also want the city to revoke laws that require the licensing of distributors and machines. Seizure of unlicensed machines by the police is unconstitutional, they further contend.

The city council passed this moratorium in January 1989 to give it time to review the current amusement machine ordinance, which members say allowed small businesses to acquire too any machines (videos, pins, jukeboxes, etc.). The council is also considering raising the license fees for each machine; it's currently $50 apiece.

"You have a mix between free enterprise and the rights of the city to monitor the use of these machines," said city attorney Aaron Dines. "Some of these machines are intolerable." He was referring to kenos used for gambling purposes.

The plaintiffs claim that the $50 fee is arbitrary, because they must move games from one location to another and pay fees each time. Additionally, distributor's licenses must be issued each time a machine is moved. Under the moratorium, a license can be renewed, but a new one cannot be issued.

Police have seized about 100 machines since January 1989. They charge $250 for impounding the machines, and the municipal court also levies charges against the distributors. Eric Bal, the attorney for the plaintiffs, said these seizures deprive distributors and operators of due process, or the right to an administrative hearing. The distributors are asking that the city repay them for the fines they paid. □

Paul Harmon
Carson City Mfg.

Are you overlooking some prime locations?

Carson City's *Star Cruiser* is an example of a specialized jukebox that adds to a location's decor.

From our perspective as a specialty jukebox manufacturer, it seems to us that coin-op equipment operators are passing up a lot of potentially great jukebox locations. Many restaurants and restaurant/bars have never had a jukebox before, or not for many years. Often, they have outmoded ideas about what jukeboxes are and what they can do. And, of course, the advent of the CD format has changed everything in many ways.

For example, many of our units are installed in upper-scale clubs and restaurants. They often have a negative image of jukeboxes; they don't think they're the type of place that would have one. But they almost always have a background/foreground music system, which is expensive to purchase or lease and has the ongoing cost of music (usually about $50 per month, often more).

These location owners and managers are almost always surprised to hear that the new CD systems have automated, low-volume background music modes. They're further surprised to hear that they contain a musical library of 100 discs, which can translate into approximately 2,000 different tunes. And the CD change time is very short—a matter of a few seconds with the NSM system.

All to say, the locations were unaware of what today's CD jukebox systems are capable of. They're often very pleasantly surprised to see that they can get small, wall-hanging jukeboxes that won't

displace so much as a chair. The locations are also surprised at how far different the full-size boxes look today; in fact, they can often add to the decor. Of course, this is where our product really shines. But other manufacturers' boxes are designed for today's tastes as well. They can make a decorative statement for the location, too.

With this type of location, the operator is not competing against another jukebox. He's competing against a background/foreground music system. And, approached properly, the operator can save the location a great deal of money, provide more and better-sounding music, and generate weekly collections that will surprise him.

Further, and of key importance, he will often find that these types of locations are more than willing to give up the majority of the cashbox. Their purpose in installing a jukebox is not the cashbox; they want a better atmosphere for their customers, decoration, better quality, and more music. They also have the additional incentive of reducing their overhead by eliminating the background music system.

"We encourage operators to try approaching fresh locations, often upper-scale locations, with a piece of equipment the location might really like to have."

We have now seen operators establish location relationships where the location agrees to effectively subsidize the purchase of our units by allowing the operator 100 percent of the cashbox for up to a year. We've also seen relationships established where location owners—whose locations simply couldn't justify the jukebox on cashbox collections—share in the purchase cost. The operator should keep in mind that the location spends a great deal of money on other equipment and decoration purchases, all with the idea of increasing food and beverage sales. Even a minor increase in their sales can vastly overshadow anything they could hope to receive from jukebox collections.

We encourage operators to try approaching fresh locations, often upper-scale locations, with a piece of equipment the location might really like to have. If the location wants it, a deal can be worked out. And they can be extremely lucrative deals for the astute operator. □

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Hot Programs

ACME '90 seminars help you master the management and mechanics of your coin-op business. Attend the College of Coin-Op Knowledge at ACME '90!

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3:00-6:00 pm

Technical Session: Power Supplies • *Speaker:* Randy Fromm

4:00-6:00 pm

Jukebox Clinic: Rockola • *Speaker:* Shuja Haque

Pinball Clinic: Williams Electronics Games • *Speaker:* Tom Cahill

5:00-7:00 pm

Management Session: Location Profit Analysis
Speaker: Charles Ross

General Session: How To Shop For Insurance
Speaker: Frank Seninsky

Friday, March 9

8:00-11:00 am

Technical Session: Monitors • *Speaker:* Randy Fromm

8:00-10:00 am

Management Session: Evaluating Your Business: How To Identify Your Company's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats • *Speaker:* H. Richard Priesmeyer, PhD.

Jukebox Clinic: NSM-Loewen • *Speaker:* Rus Strahan

Pinball Clinic: Data East • *Speaker:* Pete Gustafson

9:00-11:00 am

General Session: Cabinets • *Speaker:* Todd Erickson

General Session: How To Get The Most Out Of Your Employees • *Speaker:* Frank Seninsky

3:00-5:00 pm

Manufacturers Firing Line — Free Admission

Saturday, March 10

8:00-11:00 am

Technical Session: Conversions • *Speaker:* Randy Fromm

8:00-10:00 am

Jukebox Clinic: Rowe • *Speaker:* Joel Friedman

Pinball Clinic: Premier • *Speaker:* Bob Wilson

9:00-11:00 am

Management Session: So You Want To Impress Your Banker?
Speaker: Charles Ross

General Session: Making Money With Video
Speaker: Todd Erickson

2:00-4:00 pm

Management Session: Performance Management: How To Plan (And Achieve) In Your Business
Speaker: H. Richard Priesmeyer, PhD.

General Session: Troubleshooting Techniques To Save You Time & Money • *Speaker:* Gary Huff

5:00-7:00 pm

Jukebox Clinic: Seeburg • *Speaker:* Joe Pankus

Pinball Clinic: Midway Mfg. Co.-Bally Pinball
Speaker: Tom Cahill

Sunday, March 11

8:30-9:45 am

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MANAGEMENT SERIES — Attend any four (4) for $100 or $30 each
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☐ Evaluating Your Business....
☐ So You Want To Impress Your Banker?
☐ Performance Management...

TECHNICAL SERIES — Attend three (3) for $75 or $30 each
☐ Power Supplies ☐ Monitors ☐ Conversions

GENERAL SESSIONS — Attend three (3) for $50 or $20 each
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☐ Cabinets
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☐ Making Money With Video
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Denise Osburn

Your business logo: what does it say?

Logos are an important part of advertising and promotion. A logo differentiates your amusement center from all the other game rooms and arcades in the area. Logos help build name recognition, because images are more easily recognized and remembered than words. Also, logos help build and unify your business's image.

But saying that it is good to have a logo is somewhat like saying it is good to advertise. If you advertise in the wrong places at the wrong times, if you advertise too much or too little, or if your advertisements are ill-conceived, you will lose money and not gain business.

"It is good to advertise" is a statement that assumes you have an appealing ad placed in the most effective media at a size and cost appropriate for your budget. Likewise, saying "it's good to have a logo" assumes that you have an appealing, eye-catching, memorable logo which is being used to its best advantage.

How do you know if a logo is good? The following 10 questions can be used to evaluate your present logo, or when creating a new logo design.

Does the logo convey your "image"?

What image do you want your arcade to project? You need to consider how you want the public to view your game room. Make the design of your logo convey this message. Is the emphasis on family fun? Your logo should reflect this idea. A place for teenagers to "hang out" with their friends? The logo needs to appeal to

A rose may be a rose, but a logo can't be just any logo. It has to really tell something about your arcade or game room. The above logos are standouts. Top left: The Fun-Plex in Littleton, Colo., features this logo atop the 147,000 square foot entertainment complex. Top right: Crazy Cat's of Kettering, Ohio, really has a crazy cat logo. Center: Grand Prix Amusements Ltd. of Winnipeg, Manitoba, promises a "racing" good time. Bottom left: Bullwinkle's Family Food 'n Fun in Santa Clara, Calif., capitalizes on namesake Bullwinkle Moose. Bottom right: Fun Mountain Waterslide and Park, another Winnipeg operation, predicts oceans of fun for visitors.

modern, popular teenage images. Is it a place where both adults and children are welcome and comfortable? The design needs to be attractive to both young and old.

Does your logo match your name?

One way to increase the recognition and image-building power of the logo is to incorporate your name into the design. This can be directly with a logotype (e.g., the letters of the business name in a distinctive typestyle), or with a logo designed from the initials of the name. Also, the logo design can be purely graphic and reflect the name of the arcade. For example, Circus World can use the image of a circus tent, or Videos 'n More could incorporate a video screen or joystick.

Does the logo reflect the types of games?

It isn't essential that the logo convey what types of games and coin-op amusements you have in your center. But it is essential that the logo not mis-convey this information. For example, if your amusement center consists of kiddie rides, video games, cranes, and table games, your logo shouldn't include the outline of a pinball machine. On the other hand, if your arcade is named Pinball Mania, and all you have is different types of pinball games, a silhouette of a pinball machine would be a very appropriate logo.

Is the logo a simple or complex design?

Generally speaking, the simpler the design, the more effective the logo will be. Consider some of the best-known logos: Bell Telephone's "Bell," Mcdonald's "Arches," The American Red Cross's "Red Cross," etc.

Almost anyone you ask would be able to describe, and even draw, these symbols. The simpler the design, the more memorable it is. Also, simple designs are more timeless than very detailed logos. They will stay in style longer.

Can the logo be used on signage and stationery?

It is important that the logo be as effective when enlarged for your sign or when reduced for your business card or stationery. Some designs, when reduced to the size of a business card, become muddled and unclear. A row of thin, parallel lines is likely to fill in when reduced in size. Much of the delicate detail of a design can be lost. Other designs that look appealing and balanced on your stationery may appear strange if enlarged to the size of a sign.

Is it easy to reproduce?

Along with the previously mentioned size consideration, you need to consider the colors to be used. Your logo should not rely on color to convey its message. Color can be an effective tool for making a design eye-catching and memorable, but it should not be essential to the design.

Sooner or later, you will need to reproduce the design in black and white (for a newspaper ad, a one-time mailer insert, etc.). It just isn't feasible to always

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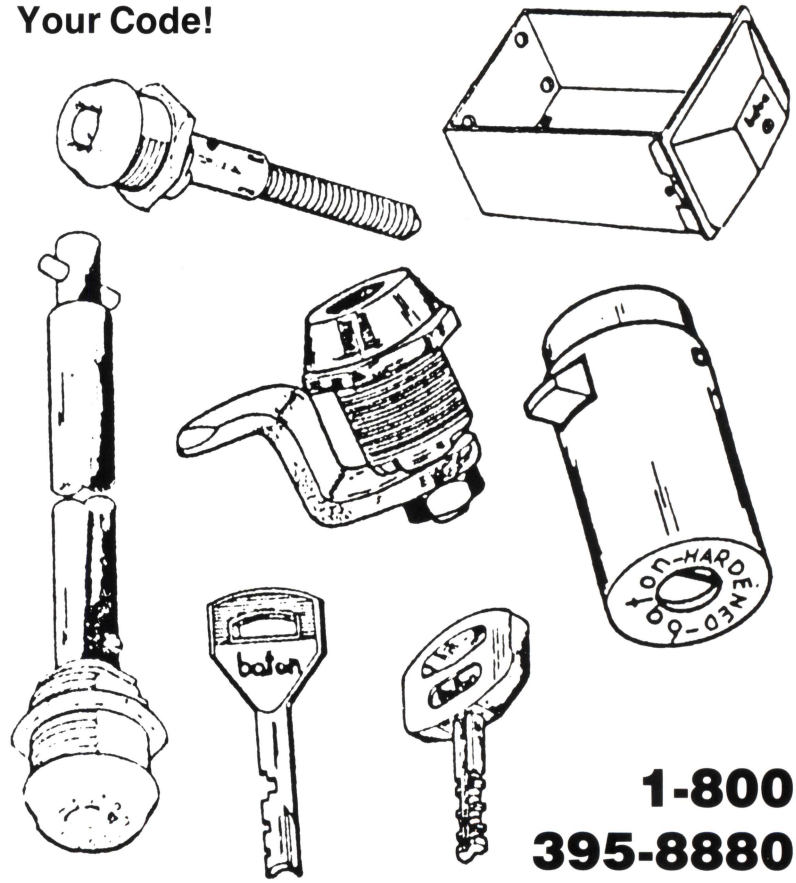

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have the logo in color. For example, NBC's Peacock is well-known for its multi-colored plumage. But this logo is just as recognizable when shown in shades of gray, or when in straight black on white. You may also want to consider if the design will work on a yellow background if you plan to use the logo in your Yellow Pages advertisement.

"Some of the best-known logos are simple in design, such as the bell by Bell Telephone and the arches by McDonald's."

Is your logo used consistently?

To increase the memorability of your logo and gain the most recognition from use of the symbol, it should appear every place your name appears. At minimum, your logo should be incorporated in your signage, your stationery, and your business cards. You may also want to use your logo on business forms, print advertisements, posters, tokens, and the games themselves. The more your logo is seen, the more its recognition value increases.

Also, the only variation to the different applications of your logo should be size and perhaps color. If the logo on your sign is slightly different from the logo on your stationery, which is slightly different than the logo on your tokens, half the value of having a logo will be lost. The design will no longer serve to unify your arcade's image, and it will be harder for people to visualize and remember.

Is what you mean what it says?

In other words, are there any conflicts in what you intended the design to mean and the meaning the viewer affixes to it? If there are any diverging meanings, how can they be fixed? For example, a logo may include the initials "clg," but a viewer may interpret them as "dcj" because of design.

Another example of mixed meanings is the connotative message vs. the denotative message. The image of a clown face denotes a clown. But this same image may elicit several different connotative messages from people. One person may connote "a fun time," another may respond with "childishness and foolishness," and still another with "circus animals, noise, and confusion." Make sure that the logo you design has positive or neutral connotations, not negative ones.

Is it eye-catching?

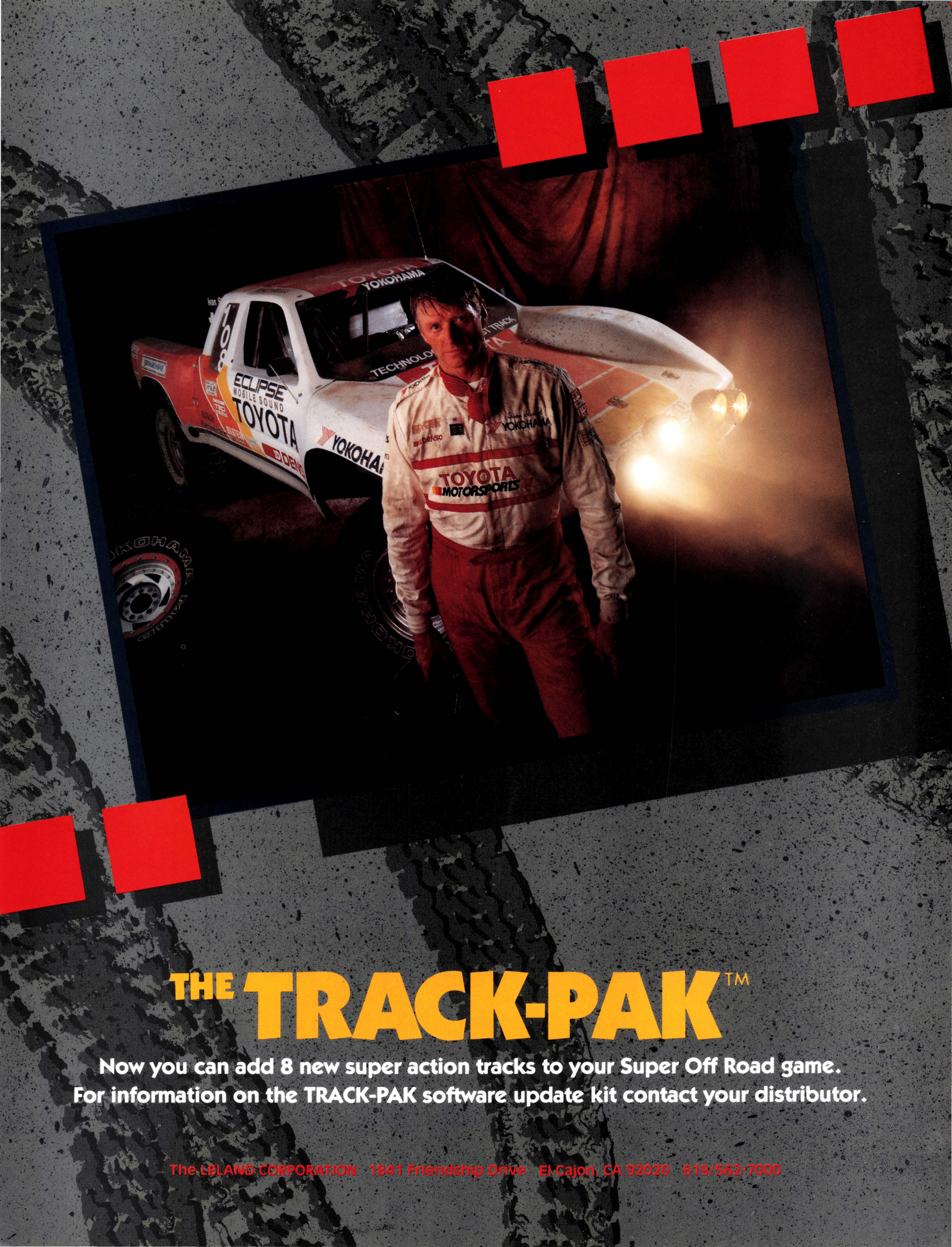
The logo should be designed so that it is different and unique and will stand out in a crowd. If your amusement center is in a vacation/resort area, this is important because you have limited time to capture the game players' attention. If your arcade is in a shopping center or suburban area, it's important to catch the attention of people passing by. If the passer-by does not have time to visit your arcade at the moment, the eye-catching logo will help your amusement center stick out in his or her mind. The game player will return to your arcade when he or she wants to play.

Is it easy to remember?

The previous nine points all add up to one thing—a logo which is easily remembered. This is the bottom line of a good logo design. If the logo is remembered by the viewer, it has served its purpose well.

One way to test a new logo for memorability is to ask several people to look at the logo. Later, ask them to draw or describe the logo. If you want to know how well people remember the logo design currently gracing your signage, ask patrons to draw or describe it (without looking at it).

These 10 questions can help you determine if you are getting the most from your logo, or if you should consider redesigning or revamping your symbol and the way you use it. Having a logo is good for business...depending on how good the logo is and how well you use it. □



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Frank Seninsky

Recurring flipper problem

It's been a while since a technical tip has appeared in this column. I thought it would be a good idea to start off 1990 with a simple pinball flipper fix. Our new technician, Ramon, gets the credit for picking out this one.

A recurring problem on the right flipper may mean fixing the left one. It doesn't seem to make sense at first, but it can happen on any Williams pinball with a separate flipper power supply like *Millionaire* or *High Speed*, etc.

Symptom: The diode on either the left or right flipper coil keeps shorting out and blowing the fuse. Changing coils doesn't solve this annoying problem.

Solution: After making sure that all the wiring on the troubled flipper is correct, check the diode of the flipper coil on the other side. In other words, if your problem is on the right flipper, check the left one. Most probably you will find an open diode or one that is loosely soldered.

How could this be possible? The instant that the E.O.S. (end of stroke) switch opens up when the flipper is activated, a voltage spike (called EMF) of self-induction is generated within the flipper coil itself.

Part of it discharges through the gap of the contacts of the E.O.S. switch in the form of an arc, which eventually burns up your contacts. However, much of it discharges through the diode that is connected across the terminals of the flipper coil.

High Speed and other pinballs with separate flipper power supplies may develop the right/left flipper problem.

This EMF of self-induction is in reverse polarity with the supply voltage. The diode is in forward bias in this direction. Together with the flipper coin on which it is shunted across, a low resistance loop is formed for the induced EMF to discharge.

If the diode is open or intermittently open due to a loose connection, the induced EMF will find some other path of least resistance to discharge itself through. It finds its way through a jumper on the flipper supply board to the diode of the flipper coil on the *other side* of the game.

If both flippers are activated at exactly the same instant, the diode of the good flipper will then have to take its own discharge *plus* the one from the other side. The diode may hold up to this punishment for a while but eventually will short out. Then, when you make a service call you tend to concentrate on the flipper that is obviously faulty because the other side is working fine.

As always, keep cranking! □

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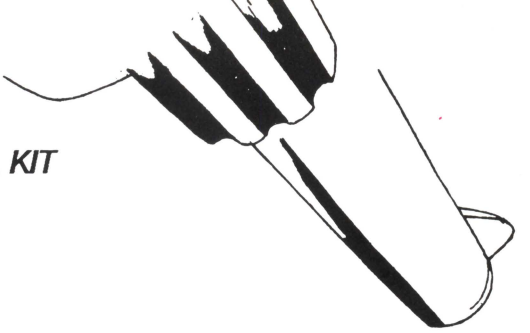

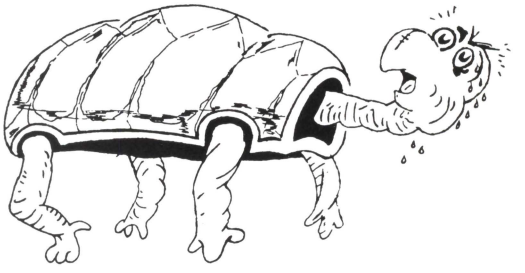

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Travels with "The Crank"

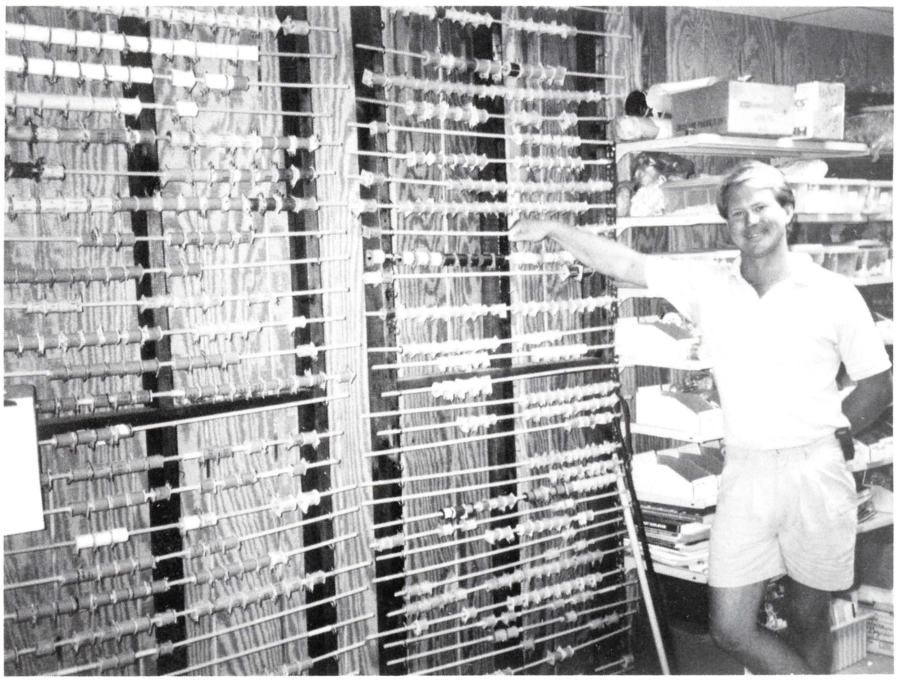
Charles Kurault has nothing on our Frank "The Crank" Seninsky, who travels in search of stories about the common man (operator). Frank criss-crosses the country doing industry seminars and working tirelessly for the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AMOA).

On recent trips down south Frank was in South Carolina where he visited R.A. Green of Rosemary Coin Machines in Myrtle Beach. R. A. proudly showed his coil racks, a great way to stock the many different kinds of coils without any damage. R.A. claims he learned to count this way, says Frank. One thing for sure, R.A. credits the coil rack idea to Jim Stansfield of Jim Stansfield Vending in Lacrosse, Wis.

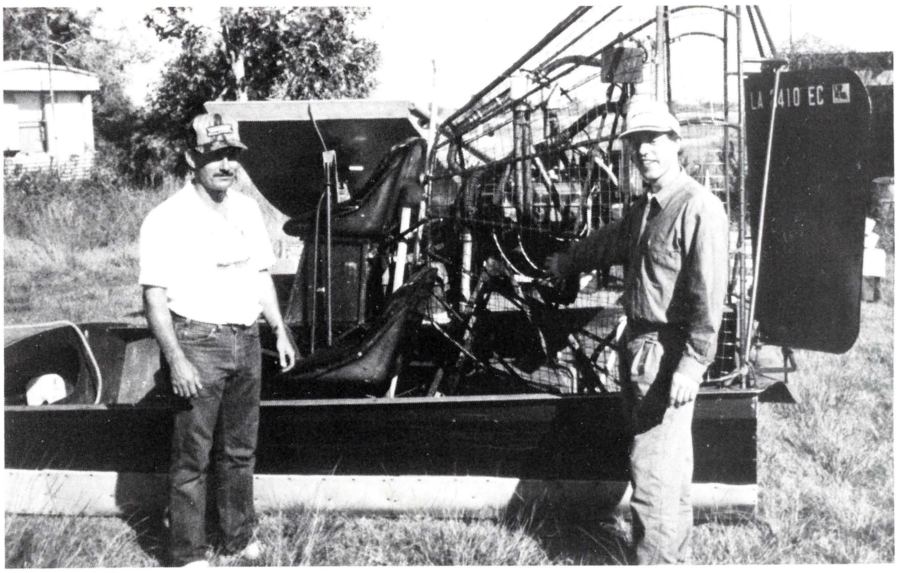
Further south, Frank joined with David Goudeau of Gerald's Amusement Machines for an industry standardization committee meeting in Lafayette, La. Frank and David are co-chairmen of the committee.

While in New Orleans, Frank participated in two seminars at the National Association of College Auxiliary Services (NACAS) Conference. Other seminar members were Bob Fay of the Amusement and Music Operators Association (AAMA) and Dean Paul Breitman of Rutgers University. The topic of the seminar: "Amusement Games—is the Gold Goose Alive Again?" According to Frank, there is an excellent chance that NACAS will support legislation for the dollar coin.

Rounding out his travels, Frank joined Group III of the AMOA continuing education program. One of the speakers was Dr. Jack Kennedy, Notre Dame professor and top level consultant. □



R. A. Green of Rosemary Coin Machines in Myrtle Beach, S.C., with the inventive coil racks.



Frank (r) and David Goudeau discuss ways to "crank up" the air boat before the alligators get loose in Lafayette, La.

Dr. Jack Kennedy addresses Group III at AMOA's continuing education program.

At the NACAS Conference, (l-r): Bob Fay, Dean Paul Breitman, and Frank.

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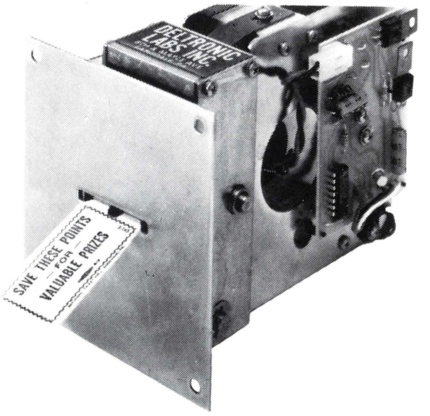

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Three stops along Merit's World Series of Darts tour

Illinois

The quad cities of Moline, East Moline, Rock Island (Illinois), and Davenport (Iowa) hosted the World Series of Darts 2nd Michelob Dry $5,000 Quad Cities Open on Nov. 17-19, 1989. The site for this dart tournament was Millertime Billiards in Moline.

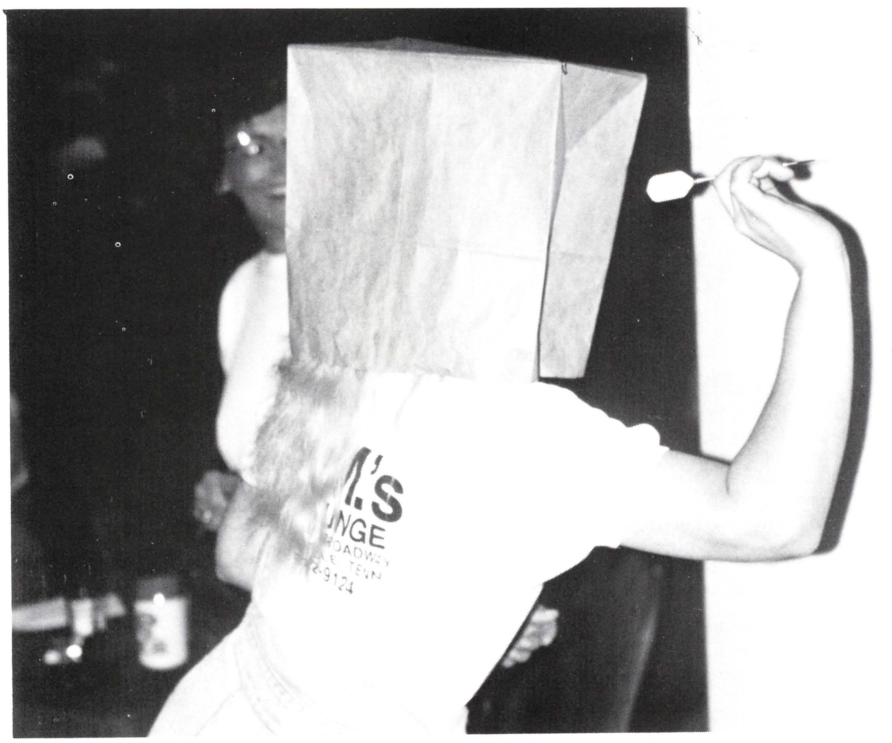
Owner Denny Miller transformed the spacious arena from a billiards venue into a darts palace, complete with bleachers and 32 Merit *Pub Time* dart games. The tournament, which was organized and promoted by Ken and Jan Auker of Quad Cities Amusements, featured players from six states. Special events throughout the weekend generated over $600 for the local Easter Seals charity. Here are the champions from each event:

Men's Singles Cut-Throat Cricket: Terry Mutton; Women's Draw Doubles: Freida Dermont and Mary Margaret McGrath; Four-Person 701: Joe Schmitz, Todd Geertz, Kelly Schumann, and Dave Handel; Open Doubles Cricket: Rick Horton and Terry Brown; Mixed Triples Cricket: Terry Brown, Rick Horton, Mary Beth Taylor; Women's Singles 301: Cathy Perot; Men's Singles 501: Steve Buff.

Wisconsin

It was "darts in the sand" for Merit's $5,000 3rd Annual Badger State Open, held on Nov. 10-12 at The Bar in Green Bay. The setting was unique, as The Bar houses indoor volleyball courts. Merit showcased its new *Pub Time II Plus 2* dart game with four-player overhead scoring.

This team finished first in Mixed Triples at the Quad Cities tournament.



This "bag lady" took part in a darting contest for charity.

The game of High-Score was played to benefit the tournament's charity, the Muscular Dystrophy Association. For $1, a player put a bag over his head and shot three darts. The highest scorers won prizes donated from Merit Industries and the Budweiser distributor of Green Bay. Among the prizes were party dart boards, T-shirts, custom dart sets, Budweiser Lights, and Budweiser mugs. Denmark Coin was the operating host. Here are the tournament winners:

Draw Doubles Cricket: Joe Schmitz and Bill Werner; Men's Doubles 301: Dave "Monkey" Handel and Kelly Schumann; Women's Doubles 301: Karen Zimmerman and Natalie Hanson; Four-Person 501: Joe Schmitz, Pat Faul, Kelly Schumann, and Dave "Monkey" Handel (team "Young Run Wild"); Women's Draw Cricket: Vicki Decleene and Diane Nitti; Mixed Doubles 301: Sue Frederickson and Bruce Holmes; Women's Singles 301: Carol Wilke; Men's Singles 501: Lee Smith.

Tennessee

The Great Smokey Mountains served as the backdrop for Merit's World Series of Darts 2nd $5,000 Volunteer Open, held in Knoxville on Oct. 13-15. This was the first regional event for the 3rd Annual World Series of Darts. Denny Havner of Precision Darts acted as host operator for the tournament.

Havner organized a celebrity competition to kick-off the festivities. Local politicians and members of the print and broadcast media gathered together to shoot darts and raise money—over $3,000—for the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Knoxville. As for the Volunteer Open itself, here are the winners of each event:

Blind Draw Doubles: Jim Posey and Greg Pearson; Four Person: Terry Brown, George Ordell, Rick Horton, and Mark Turner; Women's Doubles: Linda Manuel and Faye Raby; Open Doubles: Terry Brown and Rick Horton; Women's Draw Doubles: Gena Baverle and Angela Harper; Mixed Triples: Terry Brown, Mary Beth Taylor, and Rick Horton; Women's Singles: Becky Southern; Men's Singles: Terry Brown. □

These guys took home the first place trophy for Draw Doubles.

John Miller of Denmark Coin (l) with Lee Smith, the top finisher in the Badger State Open's Men's Singles 501. Denmark Coin served as operating host for the tournament.

These Wisconsin darters competed on Merit's new *Pub Time II Plus 2* dart machines.

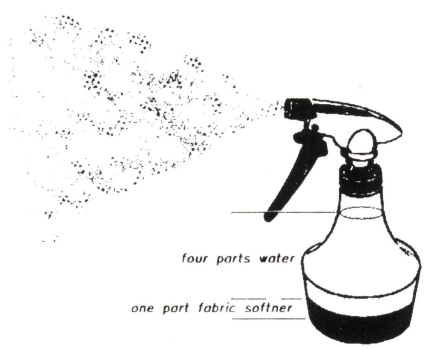
Randy Fromm

Repair Log: Hints on static and a useful tool

Everyone has a few little tricks up his sleeve, tricks that help fix something a little faster or a little easier. In some cases, a little trick can make things go a whole lot faster or even fix a problem completely! Here are a couple of items that might interest you:

Static eradicator

It's winter again. Time for problems with static electricity and time for a repeat of the old "fabric softener" trick. A basketball game in a bowling alley was freaking out every time it was hit with static. The ball-release solenoid would energize and drop the balls. If the game was being played at the time of the static discharge, it would shut off. AC power was good (including the ground connection) and the game was otherwise functioning normally.



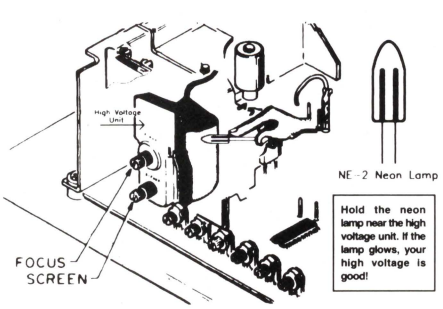
After using a whole can of (expensive) aerosol anti-static spray on the carpeting around the game, the problem was as bad as ever. The cheap-and-dirty way to beat static is to make a solution of liquid fabric softener in a pistol grip sprayer. A four to one ratio of water to fabric softener seems to be about right for most applications, but more softener may be used for particularly nasty static problems.

When static becomes a problem, simply spray the carpeting in the area immediately in front of the game. Lightly spray a radius of five feet or so. The same stuff that kills the static in clothing will kill the static in front of the game. Smells good, too!

High voltage indicator

Most of the time, it's pretty easy to tell if you have proper high-voltage in a monitor. Certainly, if there is any picture showing on the front of the screen, the high voltage must exist, for without it, there will be no picture at all.

But if there is no picture, how can you tell if the monitor's high voltage power supply is functioning? There are several ways to determine the presence of high voltage. One way is to look for the glowing heaters in the neck of the picture tube. Since the CRT heaters are driven by a winding on the flyback transformer in the high voltage unit, glowing heaters are an almost sure-fire indicator of the presence of high-voltage. The opposite in NOT true, however. The absence of heater glow does not necessarily indicate a lack of high voltage.


High Voltage Unit
NE-2 Neon Lamp
Hold the neon lamp near the high voltage unit. If the lamp glows, your high voltage is good!
FOCUS
SCREEN

The squeal that is generated by a high voltage unit is another indicator of high voltage in a monitor. But this high-pitched squeal is not always audible. Sometimes it's too noisy where you are working. Some people with high frequency hearing loss cannot hear the squeal at all.

Turning off the monitor and testing for high voltage by drawing an arc from the charge in the picture tube is doubtful at best. Some problems will turn the high voltage on just long enough to charge the tube and then shut it off. Some picture tubes will barely hold a charge at all. Testing for high voltage by drawing an arc from the second anode (the high voltage connection) with the monitor turned on is suicidal!

This leaves a couple of options for determining the presence of high voltage in a monitor. One of them costs money; the other does not. The best way—the proper way—the correct way—the expensive way—is to use a high voltage probe or high voltage meter to make a proper measurement of the voltage at the second anode of the CRT.

The cheap way is to use a small, neon lamp. Held near the high voltage unit, the lamp will glow orange if things are working okay. The NE-2 neon lamp is available from virtually any electronic components supplier (even Radio Shack) for around 50 cents. While the neon lamp may not be as accurate as a bona-fide high voltage probe, it costs a whole lot less. Takes up less room in the tool box as well!

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Program #2 Semiconductors — Approximately 30 minutes — $29.95
Semiconductors are electronic components like diodes and transistors. Many of the failures we encounter in electronic games can be traced to a semiconductor failure. This program covers the semiconductor components that are found in videogames and pinball machines. Topics include identification, testing and obtaining replacement components. This lesson is a **MUST** for the novice technician.

Program #3 Power Supplies Parts 1 & 2 — Approximately 60 minutes — $49.95
Power supplies are easy to understand and to repair. This two part lesson covers both power supplies and voltage regulator circuits in great detail. This program is a recommended prerequesite for those wishing to learn to repair videogame monitors as many monitor problems can be traced to failures in the monitor's power supply.

Program #4 Raster Scan Monitors — Approximately 60 minutes — $49.95
The popularity of conversion kits in today's operations means that videogame monitors must be kept operating longer than ever before. This lesson details the operation of monitors and outlines many of the common problems you can expect to encounter. Monitor safety is also covered in this lesson.

Program #5 The Digital Multimeter — Approximately 30 minutes — $29.95
The DMM is the single most important piece of test equipment you can use on your route. This lesson shows you how to use the DMM to make all of the tests and measurements necessary for repairing games. I believe this is the single most important program in the videotape training series.

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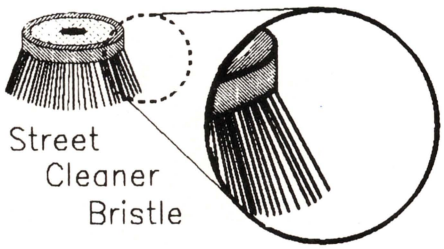
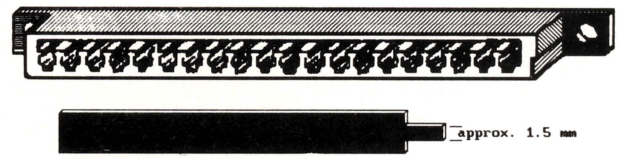
Bristling with usefulness

If I mentioned an item called a "street cleaner bristle," would you know what I was talking about? Have you ever walked by the curb of a paved road and found this little strip of metal (about 1/8-inch) lying in the road? For the past 18 years, I have been keeping my eyes peeled for them. They're street cleaner bristles and they are



very handy items to have on hand! They're so handy that I've gone out of my way to pick them up when I spot them on the street.



Edge Connector Pin Removal Tool

The primary use for the springy, steel bristles is for removing coin jams in long coin chutes. They can also be filed or ground into "rakes" for picking locks (like back door locks on games where the key has fallen down inside the game somewhere or has been otherwise lost). By the way, despite what you see on "Mission Impossible," it ain't all that easy to pick locks!

By grinding or filing the end of the bristle, you can make a tool for removing the pins from edge connectors. You just inset the tool from the "board" end of the connector and pull the wire out of the back side. This tool is a must for conversions.

By an unbelievable stroke of fortune, I no longer have to search the highways of America as a source of supply for my bristles. I was given a large piece of a street cleaner brush by Ken Towle of Star Amusements (Knoxville, Tenn.) Some months later, I found a very large section of brush (containing hundreds of bristles) in front of the hotel in Columbia, S.C., where I was leading an AMOA technical seminar.

I am happy to share my bonanza with anyone that wants one. Send a self-addressed, stamped #10-sized envelope to me, and I'll send you a bristle by return mail. Offer good while supplies last. Send your request to Randy Fromm, 7960 Culowee St., La Mesa, Calif. 92041. Please, no telephone requests! □

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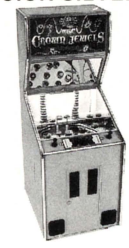

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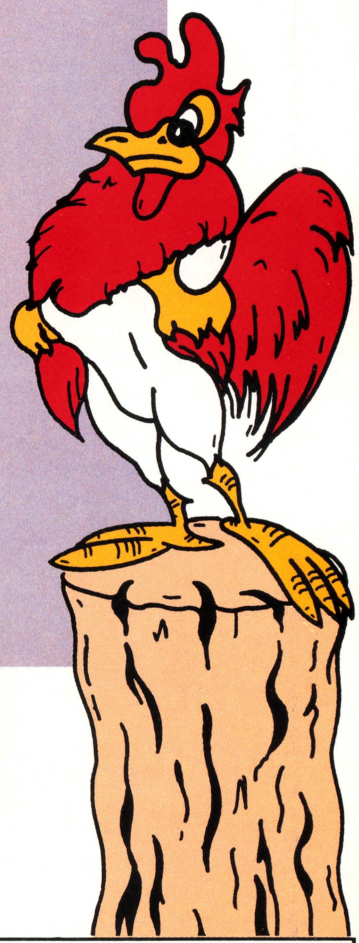

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Communications system

The Radius Division of Motorola Inc. has introduced the On-Site Communication System for quick and easy contact of individuals within a local system. It's comprised of the RPB50 Radio/Paging Base, the PR3000 Tone and Voice Pager, and the On-Site P50+ Portable Two-Way Radio.

Radius On-Site products are crystal controlled. Motorola will stock the On-Site System on 10 selected UHF offset frequencies for ease of ordering and licensing. To assure total customer satisfaction, Radius On-Site products must pass accelerated life testing and are backed by a two-year warranty. The system is available through authorized Motorola Radius Resellers.

For more information on the system's individual components, contact Motorola Inc., Communications Sector, Public Relations Dept., 1301 E. Algonquin Road, Schaumburg, IL 60196; (312) 397-1000. □

PTC thermistors

Robert G. Allen has unveiled a new line of products, Positive Temperature Coefficient (PTC) thermistors. They are thermally sensitive resistors that show an extremely rapid increase in resistance (several decades) when heated beyond their switching temperature (Tsw).

PTC thermistors are available in radial, chip, and surface-mount chip formats. Features include self-regulating heaters, over-temperature sensing, temperature compensation, air flow/liquid level sensing, time delay, degaussing, arc suppression, and solid-state fusing. Delivery is stock to eight weeks ARO.

For more information, or product samples, contact Customer Service, Robert G. Allen Co., 7267 Coldwater Canyon, N. Hollywood, CA 91605; (800) 423-3186 or (818) 765-8300 in California.

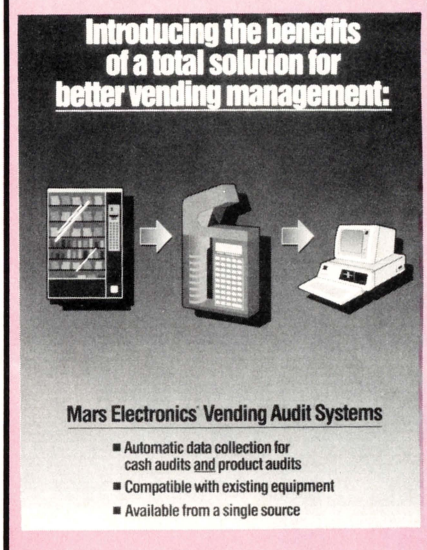
Audit system

Mars Electronics International has introduced new audit system capabilities that enable vending machine operators to gather data about vending sales and operations automatically. Incorporating the system within routine restocking operations provides vendors with up-to-date information for better vending management.

With this information, the user can conduct cash and product audits, track machine maintenance and profitability, and monitor route driver activity. The new systems take advantage of audit capabilities built into a vendor's existing electronic coin mechanisms, bill acceptors, and vending machines. The company can also provide audit box capabilities to be retrofitted into existing machines where necessary.

All communications formats meet proposed NAMA standards, including existing DDCMP optical links for both U.S. (1200 baud) and European (2400 baud) standards or DDCMP or DEX-UCS
wired links.

For more information, contact Mars Electronics International Inc., 1301 Wilson Drive, West Chester, PA 19380; (215) 430-2500.


Introducing the benefits of a total solution for better vending management:
Mars Electronics' Vending Audit Systems
■ Automatic data collection for cash audits and product audits
■ Compatible with existing equipment
■ Available from a single source

Line of Fire

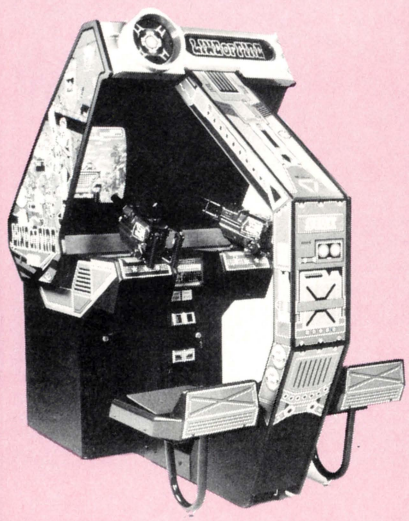
Eight action-packed stages with 3-D effects greet the player in Sega's machine gun game, *Line of Fire*. Striking graphics on the unique cabinet invite players to the two-seater vehicle and battling guns.

The game scenario: two agents sneak into a guerrilla base and steal the enemy's latest and most powerful machine gun. While attempting to escape, the agents encounter a barrage of hand grenades, rockets, and missiles from the enemy.

Action occurs in jungles and deserts, along rivers and canyons, while aboard a speed boat, jeep, airplane, and helicopter.

Each player station has a machine gun with grenade launcher button. Players are blessed with unlimited machine gun fire and can gain up to 10 grenades by shooting at bomb crates on the screen. Life is extended by shooting at the first aid packages on-screen. Game features include buy-in, continuous play option, and two-player interaction.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Sega Enterprises USA Inc., 2149 Paragon Drive, P.O. Box 610550, San Jose, CA 95161-0550; (408) 435-0201 (FAX 408-435-0294).



Tri-Sports

The recreational games of pool, bowling, and golf are all found in one new video from Bally/Midway called *Tri-Sports*, which features Pool Shark, Power Strike, and Mini-Golf Deluxe.

Pool Shark is a game that offers straight pool, rotation, and nine ball; it's sure to please the tastes of every pool enthusiast. Power Strike lets players chose from regulation, flash, and triple strike for their alley-action. Mini-Golf Deluxe lends a new twist to the typical miniature golf course action.

All three titles bring super-realistic action to the screen for one to four players to enjoy. The Bally trac-ball allows for accurate, precise shots no matter which game players select.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Midway Mfg. Co., 3401 N. California Ave., Chicago, IL 60618; (312) 267-2240 (FAX 312-267-8435).

Roll Down

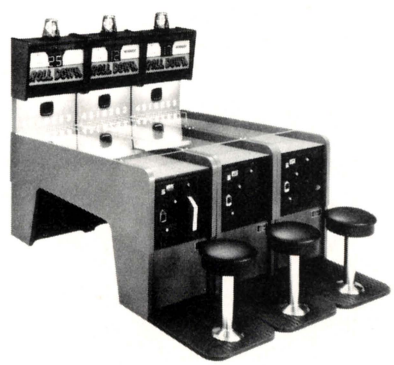
Redemption-minded operators will be interested in Bay Tek's universally-appealing game, *Roll Down*.

Roll Down features include audio voice and sound effects, flashing lighted beacon for winners, automatic coin and/or token operation, single ball release, and faceplate target lighting.

Each unit is free-standing and comes in the standard colors of deep teal and cerise or orange and yellow. A host of options are available, from winning score sign to attached stool with base.

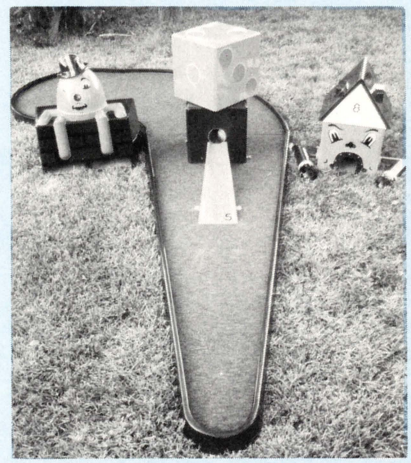
In the game, players roll a total of six balls down an incline to gain a high or low score (6 or 36 are perfect scores). *Roll Down* is programmable with dip switch changes for winning scores, tickets, and coins. Counters and custom colors are available.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Bay Tek, 1077 Sunlite Drive, Oneida, WI 54155 (414) 822-3951 or (414) 434-1616 (FAX 414-434-2389).



Pixie Miniature Golf Course

Leisuretime Consultants offers a whole new approach to miniature golf with its *Pixie Miniature Golf Course*. Constructed of durable fiberglass, the course is composed of prefabricated modules that come installation-ready with different hazards and obstacles on each hole.



The course includes four basic interlocking module sections that each have a tee, green, straight extension panel (six feet long), and 90-degree curved angle (six feet long). Creative use of the modules provides many hole lengths and configurations.

Leisuretime offers a nine-hole course and 18-hole version delivered complete with component sections, obstacles and hazards, artificial turf, hardware, balls, putters, and scorecards.

Among the colorful obstacles are Humpty Dumpty, rolling dice, spooky house, funny fright castle, and space monster. Additional panels can be purchased to change or lengthen the design for a constantly new-looking course.

For more information, write Leisuretime Consultants Inc., P.O. Box 17085, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33319; (305) 973-9342 (FAX 305-752-1576).

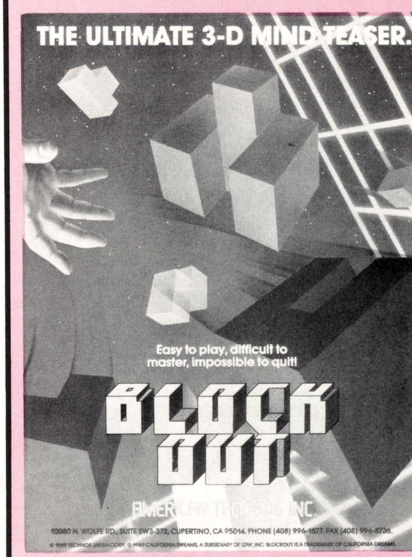
Blockout

American Technos introduces a game of 3-D action and strategy with *Blockout*, a video that challenges the player's reflexes in a test of coordination and quick thinking.

Play begins in a pit that's a 3-D enclosure with length, width, and depth. Various 3-D blocks fall into the pit during game play and the player must rotate and maneuver each one into position to form a complete layer. As each layer is completed it vanishes, awarding points and giving more room to work the next layer.

Features include two-player interaction, a game start level select, buy-in and game continuation, bonus rounds, unique game control configuration, and 100 different stages. Music changes from one stage to another, as does the playfield.

For more information, or distributor referral, write American Technos Inc., 10080 N. Wolfe Road, Suite SW3, Cupertino, CA 95014; (408) 996-1877 (FAX 408-996-8736).



Beast Busters

SNK has developed a three player interactive gun game in *Beast Busters*, a fast-paced action adventure that takes players on an investigative mission in a mysterious city.

Players take on the persona of heroes John, Paul, and Sammy, a team sent into a city newly occupied by zombies and mutants. Armed with Uzi machine guns, players face game scenes on the 25-inch color monitor.

Seven different action scenes allow players to build up a multitude of weapons, from grenades and rocket bombs to the deadly lightning bomb. Energy can be restored by shooting first-aid boxes and life jackets.

Cabinet measurements are 74 inches high, 35 inches wide, and 47 inches deep.

For more information, or distributor referral, write SNK Corp. of America, 246 Sobrante Way, Sunnyvale, CA 94086; (408) 736-8844 (FAX 408-736-0466).

Badlands

Atari introduces the first universal driving kit in *Badlands*, a Sprint racing game gone bad.

The game takes players to a future time 50 years after a nuclear disaster. The sport of Sprint racing is now a ruthless battle between armed cars. Races take place on tracks built in the ruins of the dangerous nuclear zone, Badlands.

One or two players can race at any time with the game's buy-in and continuation features. Players can shoot playfield targets for extra points and bonus missiles.

As with *Super Sprint* and *Championship Sprint*, each *Badlands* race has four laps. Players can continue on to the next racing heat if they beat the drone car. There are eight unique track layouts set in eight different animated backgrounds that react to player shots and crashes. Backgrounds are: City, Desert, Volcano, Junk Yard, Prison Yard, Refinery, Military Base, and Freeway.

Badlands comes with printed circuit board, two steering wheel assemblies, control panel mounting plate, two foot pedal assemblies and mounting brackets, four fire button assemblies, attraction artwork film, control panel decal, monitor bezel, side panel decal, game poster, JAMMA harness, and instructions.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Atari Games Corp., 675 Sycamore Drive, Milpitas, CA 95035; (408) 434-3700.

DUX

Two-Bit Score Amusements has released a new after-market software product, *DUX*, a Nu-Graphics program that easily changes the games *Centipede* or *Millipede*.

DUX can give new life to these older games on location by way of inexpensive sets of ROMs that plug quickly into these original games.

After installation in *Centipede*, a game player will find himself in an apple orchard armed with a double-barreled shotgun. Flocks of ducks pass overhead working their way closer to the player (intrepid hunter), who must blast them all before they swoop down and attack him. Falling ducks present a constant danger to the player.

The version for *Millipede* also includes bird dogs, exploding pick-up trucks, helicopters, buzzards, and more.

Both versions are sold directly to operators.

For more information, write Two-Bit Score Amusements, 11600 Manchaca Road, Austin, TX 78748; (512) 282-9369.

New Twister

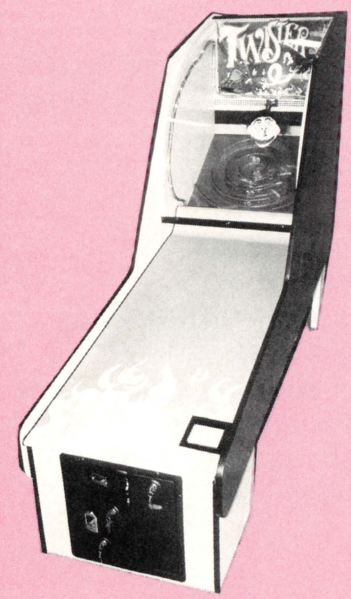
Exidy has redesigned and reinforced the cabinet on its redemption game, *Twister*, and made several improvements of note.

New features include a plex top hood that keeps balls from going astray, optically coupled sensor switches, trap door for easy bottom access, flashing attract lights, and an all-in-one coin mechanism/ticket mechanism/security coin box.

Twister is a ball bowling game that challenges players to land the balls in numbered holes good for points that add up to dispensed tickets. Players of all ages can easily understand the object of the game and compete on an even footing.

The new design is in response to feedback from operators and industry technicians. A suggested setting: nine balls dispensed with the first ticket coming for a score of 75/100, and subsequent tickets dispensed for every additional 40 points.

For more information, or distributor referral, write Exidy, 4770 Caterpillar Road, Redding, CA 96003; (415) 325-5814 (FAX 415-325-5817).



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HOT SINGLES

TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. Another Day In Paradise Atlantic 7-88774	Phil Collins
2. Don't Know Much Elektra 7-69261	Linda Ronstadt
3. We Didn't Start The Fire Columbia 38-73021	Billy Joel
4. Rhythm Nation A&M 1455	Janet Jackson
5. With Every Beat of My Heart Arista 1-9895	Taylor Dayne
6. Back To Life Virgin 7-99171	Soul II Soul
7. Pump Up The Jam SBK 07311	Technotronic Featuring Felly
8. Just Like Jesse James Geffen 7-22844	Cher
9. This One's For The Children Columbia 38-73064	New Kids On The Block
10. Living In Sin Mercury 876 070-7/Polygram	Bon Jovi
11. How Am I Supposed To Live Without You Columbia 38-73017	Michael Bolton
12. Everything MCA 53714	Jody Watley
13. Blame It On The Rain Arista 1-9904	Milli Vanilli
14. Swing The Mood Music Factory 7-99140/AtcoJive Bunny/Mastermixers	
15. Just Between You And Me Atlantic 7-88781	Lou Gramm
16. Love Song Geffen 7-22856	Tesla
17. Free Fallin' MCA 53748	Tom Petty
18. When The Night Comes Capitol 44437	Joe Cocker
19. Downtown Train Warner Bros. 7-22685	Rod Stewart
20. Two To Make It Right Vendetta 1464/A&M	Seduction

COMPACT DISCS

TITLE Label & Number/Distributing Label	ARTIST
1. ...But Seriously Atlantic 82050-2	Phil Collins
2. Storm Front Columbia CK44366	Billy Joel
3. Girl You Know It's True Arista ARCD 8592	Milli Vanilli
4. Steel Wheels Columbia CK45333	Rolling Stones
5. Journeyman Duck 2-26074/Reprise	Eric Clapton
6. Cosmic Thing Reprise 2-25854/Warner Bros.	The B-52s
7. A Fresh Aire Christmas American Gramaphone AGCD-1988	Mannheim Steamroller
8. Janet Jackson's Rhythm Nation 1814 A&M CD 3920	Janet Jackson
9. Pump Geffen GHS2-24254	Aerosmith
10. Forever Your Girl Virgin 2-90943	Paula Abdul
11. Presto Atlantic 82040-2	Rush
12. Full Moon Fever MCA MCAD 6253	Tom Petty
13. Back On The Block Qwest 2-26020/Warner Bros.	Quincy Jones
14. Mannheim Steamroller Christmas American Gramaphone AGCD-1984	Mannheim Steamroller
15. Cry Like A Rainstorm Elektra 60872-2	Linda Ronstadt
16. A Very Special Christmas A&M CD 3911	Various Artists
17. Live Arista A2CD-8613	Kenny G
18. Dr. Feelgood Elektra 60829-2	Motley Crue
19. Hangin' Tough Columbia CK 40985	New Kids On The Block
20. Crossroads Elektra 60888-2	Tracy Chapman

Bill,

I need to know ...

1. Should I rotate the Double Dragon at Quick Mart?
2. Did you want to put another machine into Zak's Pizza?
3. Should we sell one of our Main Events?
4. Do you want me to pull everything from Video Theatre this week?
5. Does Hilda have my collection reports ready for tomorrow?

Charles

The PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM is computer software that takes control of all your amusement or vending equipment. Here is software for your microcomputer that calculates and delivers profits to your bottom line. It is not a general accounting package; its a system for you if you manage revenue-producing equipment (arcade or route). It makes every machine and every location a profit center and focuses on profits, ROI, collection histories, transfer dates, and meter readings.

And getting the answers to your questions is no great effort; our 70+ page instruction manual explains THE PROFIT CONTROL SYSTEM in detail. Installation is quick and using the program is easy. Entering collections is simple; equipment transfers, different token rates, and minimums are no problem. And, you never have to write another collection ticket by hand.

Here are the details. MS/DOS compatible for popular systems like IBM, Compaq, Tandy, etc. based on 8086, 80286, or 80386 microprocessors. Operating System: MS/DOS (or PC/DOS) 2.0 or higher. Language: Compiled QuickBasic by Microsoft. Memory Requirement: Minimum 256k with two disks or harddisk. Printer Requirements: 132 characters per line capacity in standard or compressed print, continuous paper feed recommended. Equipment Capacity: Limited only by disk storage space. Practical limits are 50 to 5000 pieces of equipment. Disk Format: All orders include both 3-1/2" and 5-1/4" disk formats.

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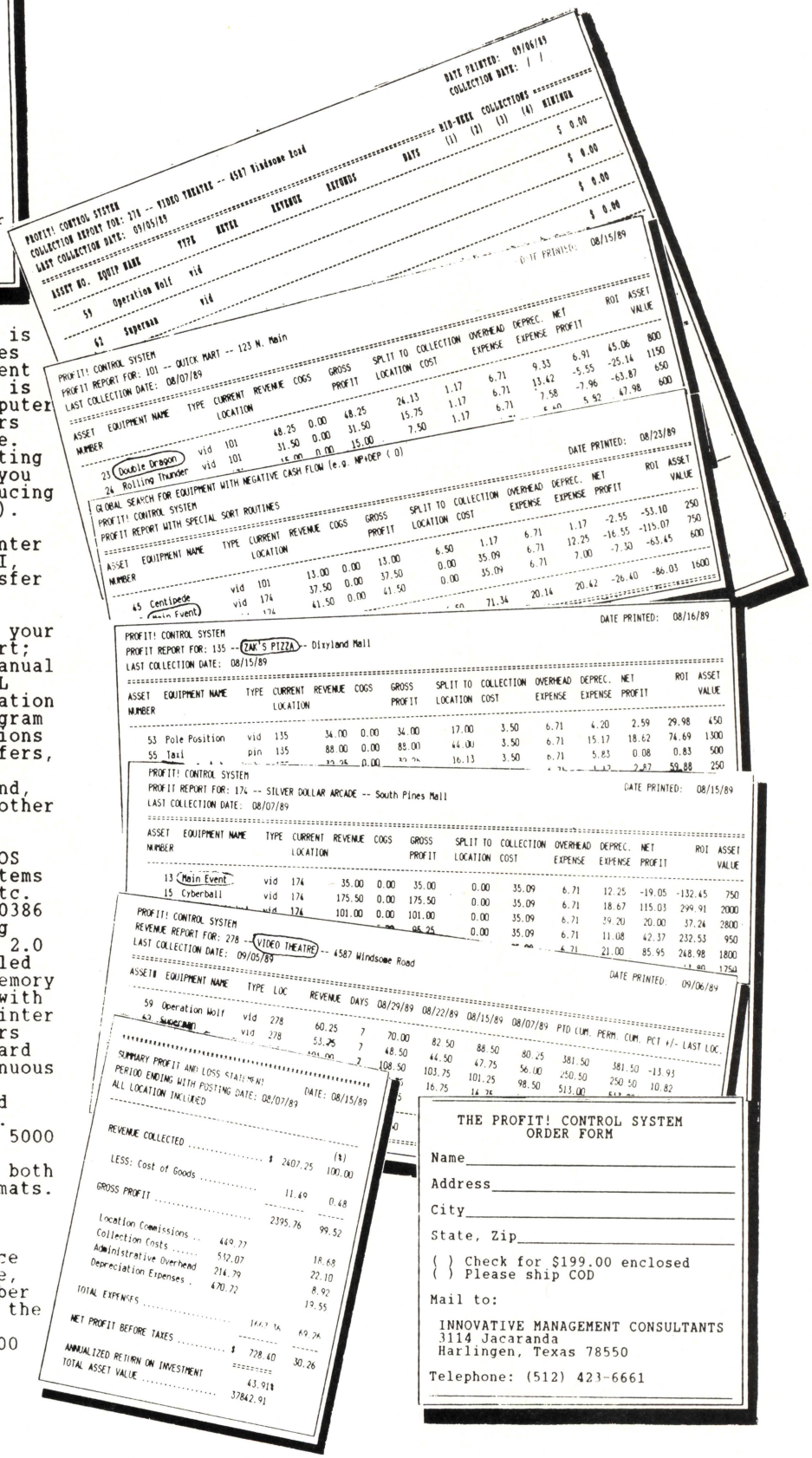
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
COLLECTION REPORT FOR: 278 -- VIDEO THEATRE -- 4587 Windsome Road
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89
DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89
COLLECTION DATE: / /

ASSET NO. EQUIP NAME TYPE REVEN EXPENSE REPORTS DAYS BID-EXEC COLLECTIONS (1) (2) (3) (4) MINIMUM

59 Operation Wolf vid $ 0.00
62 Superman vid $ 0.00
$ 0.00
$ 0.00

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 101 -- QUICK MART -- 123 N. Main
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DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	CURRENT LOCATION	REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION	COLLECTION COST	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
23	Double Dragon	vid	101	48.25	0.00	48.25	24.13	1.17	6.71	9.33	6.91	45.06	800
24	Rolling Thunder	vid	101	31.50	0.00	31.50	15.75	1.17	6.71	13.42	-5.55	-25.14	1150
				15.00	0.00	15.00	7.50	1.17	6.71	7.58	-7.96	-63.87	650
											5.52	47.98	600

GLOBAL SEARCH FOR EQUIPMENT WITH NEGATIVE CASH FLOW (e.g. NP+DEP (0)
PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT WITH SPECIAL SORT ROUTINES
DATE PRINTED: 08/23/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	CURRENT LOCATION	REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION	COLLECTION COST	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
45	Centipede	vid	101	13.00	0.00	13.00	6.50	1.17	6.71	1.17	-2.55	-53.10	250
	(Main Event)	vid	174	37.50	0.00	37.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	12.25	-16.55	-115.07	750
				41.50	0.00	41.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	7.00	-7.50	-63.45	600
												-86.03	1600
											20.42	-26.40	
							71.34		20.14				

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 135 -- (ZAK'S PIZZA) -- Dixyland Mall
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/15/89
DATE PRINTED: 08/16/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	CURRENT LOCATION	REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION	COLLECTION COST	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
53	Pole Position	vid	135	34.00	0.00	34.00	17.00	3.50	6.71	4.20	2.59	29.98	450
55	Taxi	pin	135	88.00	0.00	88.00	44.00	3.50	6.71	15.17	18.62	74.69	1300
					0.00		16.13	3.50	6.71	5.83	0.08	0.83	500
											2.87	59.88	250

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
PROFIT REPORT FOR: 174 -- SILVER DOLLAR ARCADE -- South Pines Mall
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 08/07/89
DATE PRINTED: 08/15/89

ASSET NUMBER	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	CURRENT LOCATION	REVENUE	COGS	GROSS PROFIT	SPLIT TO LOCATION	COLLECTION COST	OVERHEAD EXPENSE	DEPREC. EXPENSE	NET PROFIT	ROI	ASSET VALUE
13	(Main Event)	vid	174	35.00	0.00	35.00	0.00	35.09	6.71	12.25	-19.05	-132.45	750
15	Cyberball	vid	174	175.50	0.00	175.50	0.00	35.09	6.71	18.67	115.03	299.91	2000
		vid	174	101.00	0.00	101.00	0.00	35.09	6.71	39.20	20.00	37.24	2800
						95.25	0.00	35.09	6.71	11.08	42.37	232.53	950
									6.71	21.00	85.95	248.98	1800
												13.80	1750

PROFIT! CONTROL SYSTEM
REVENUE REPORT FOR: 278 -- (VIDEO THEATRE) -- 4587 Windsome Road
LAST COLLECTION DATE: 09/05/89
DATE PRINTED: 09/06/89

ASSET#	EQUIPMENT NAME	TYPE	LOC	REVENUE	DAYS	08/29/89	08/22/89	08/15/89	08/07/89	PTD	CUM.	PERM.	CUM. PCT +/-	LAST LOC.
59	Operation Wolf	vid	278	60.25	7	70.00	82.50	88.50	80.25	381.50	381.50	-13.93		
62	Superman	vid	278	53.25	7	48.50	44.50	47.75	56.00	250.50	250.50	10.82		
				101.00	7	108.50	103.75	101.25	98.50	513.00				
							16.75	14.25						

SUMMARY PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
PERIOD ENDING WITH POSTING DATE: 08/07/89
DATE: 08/15/89
ALL LOCATION INCLUDED

		(%)
REVENUE COLLECTED	$ 2407.25	100.00
LESS: Cost of Goods	11.49	0.48
GROSS PROFIT	2395.76	99.52
Location Commissions	449.77	
Collection Costs	512.07	18.68
Administrative Overhead	214.79	22.10
Depreciation Expenses	470.72	8.92
TOTAL EXPENSES		19.55
NET PROFIT BEFORE TAXES	$ 728.40	30.26
ANNUALIZED RETURN ON INVESTMENT	43.91%	
TOTAL ASSET VALUE	37842.91	

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Eswat Kit (new dedicated) . 895
Narc 1995
New York New York 6295
1942 (s/d) 550
Pixel #903 750
Pixel #905 900
Sonic Triple Crane 1495
Speed Buggy 995
Splash Down 2995
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Stun Runner (s/d) 3595
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Legend of Kage 100
Main Event 250
1943 200
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yie Ar Kung Fu 100

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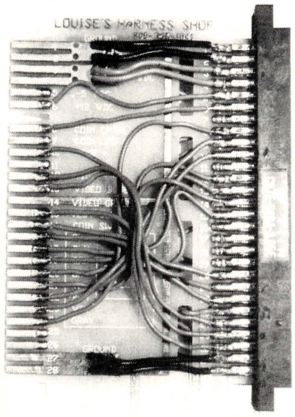

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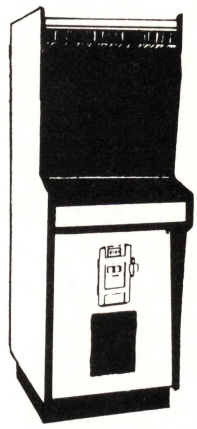

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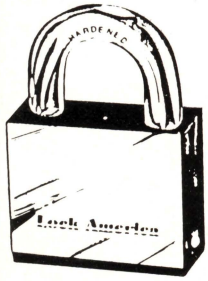

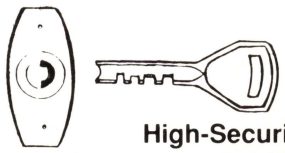

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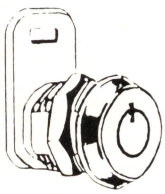

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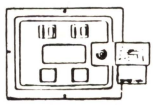

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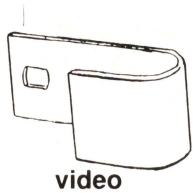
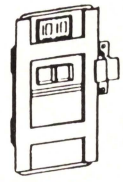


video game bar 697-G07



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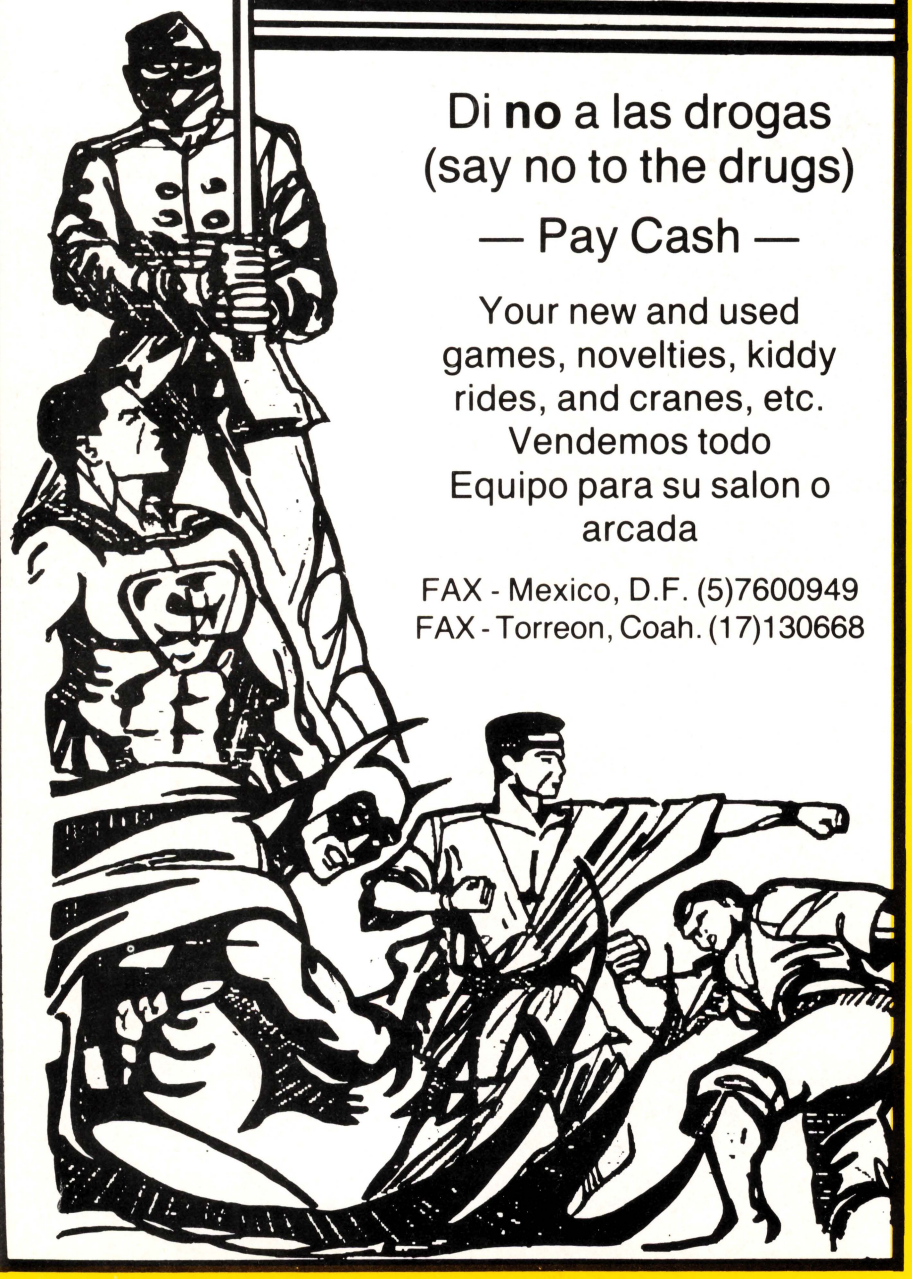

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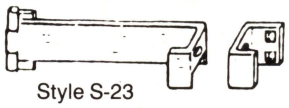

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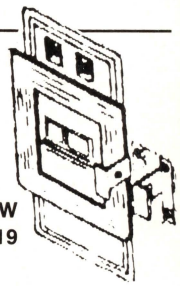

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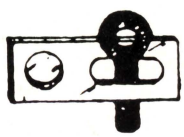

style S-5, S-6
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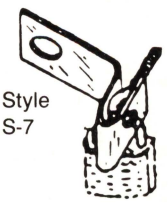

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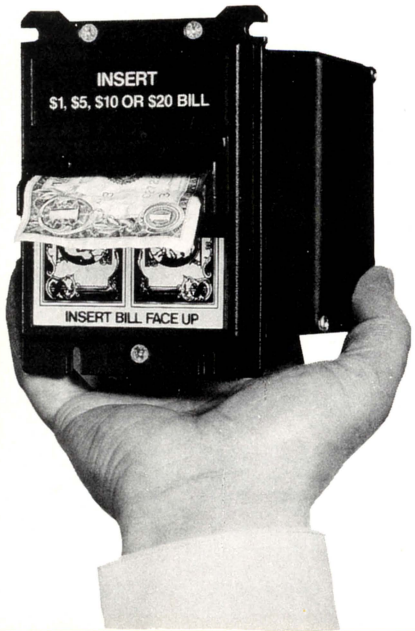

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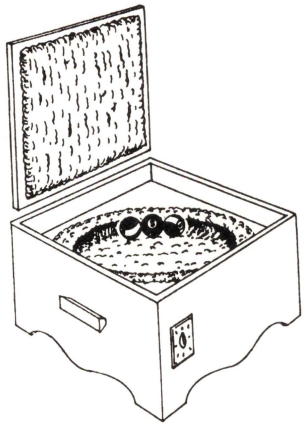

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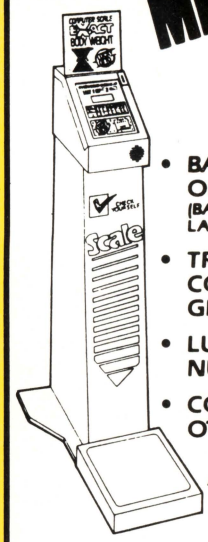

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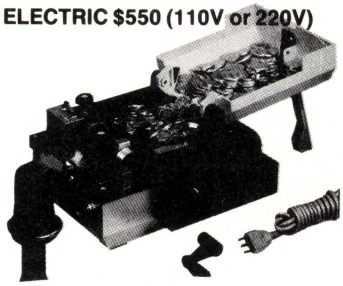

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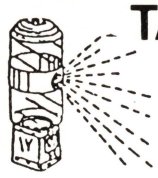

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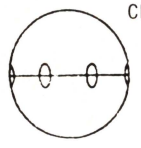

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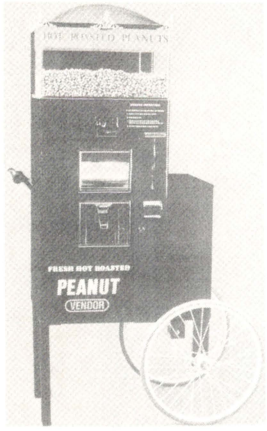

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THE CALENDAR

International

March 8-11

Spring ENADA Coin Machine Show, Rimini Exhibition Centre, Rimini, Italy. Contact Ente Autonomo Fiera Di Rimini, Via della Fiera, 52; 47037 Rimini (Fo); Tel 0541/782000; Telex 550844 Fierim I, FAX 0541/774313.

National

February 10-11

Regional Seminar with Frank "The Crank" and StarTech Journal, American Vending Sales, Wood Dale, Ill. Contact Frank Seninsky (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

February 23-25

South Carolina Coin Operators Association (SCCOA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Columbia, S.C. Contact Helen Sikes (803) 779-2498 or (803) 345-2048.

February 24-25

Regional Seminar with Frank "The Crank" and StarTech Journal, Shaffer Distributing Co., Columbus, Ohio. Contact Frank Seninsky (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

March 9-11

American Coin Machine Expo (ACME), sponsored by Play Meter and the American Amusement Machine Association (AAMA), The Hyatt in Chicago. Contact W.T. Glasgow, Inc. (312) 333-9292.

March 23-24

Valley World Soft-Tip Dart Championships, Omni Hotel, Orlando, Fla. Contact Valley Recreation Products (517) 892-4536.

March 23-25

National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Western Convention and Exhibit of Vending and Foodservice Management, San Jose Convention Center, San Jose, Calif. Contact NAMA (312) 346-0370.

March 23-25

Minnesota Operators of Music and Amusements (MOMA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Minneapolis, Minn. Contact Hy Sandler (612) 927-6662.

March 30-31

Georgia Amusement and Music Operators Association (GAMOA) Trade Show and Convention, Holiday Inn, Roswell, Ga. Contact Stan Miller (404) 424-8105.

March 31—April 1

Regional Seminar with Frank "The Crank" and StarTech Journal, Birmingham Vending, Orlando, Fla. Contact Frank Seninsky (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

April 13-14

Washington Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMOA) Northwest Expo, Bellevue, Wash. Contact Steve Anderson (206) 682-5700 or Jim Markham (206) 256-8062.

April 19-22

Florida Amusement and Vending Association (FAVA) Annual Convention and Trade Show, Omni Expo Center, Orlando, Fla. Contact FAVA (904) 878-3134.

April 21-22

Regional Seminar with Frank "The Crank" and StarTech Journal, New England Coin, Norwood, Mass. Contact Frank Seninsky (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

April 29—May 1

AMOA Government Affairs Conference, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, D.C. Contact AMOA (312) 644-6610 or direct (312) 565-4602.

May 2-5

AMOA National Dart Association 5th Annual International Team Championship, Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, Nev. Contact Joe Conway (414) 263-2444.

May 4-6

Northeast Regional Amusement Machine Convention and Trade Show, Trump Regency, Atlantic City, N.J. Contact Sue Matterson (518) 439-0981.

May 11-12

Ohio Coin Machine Association (OCMA) Expo '90 Trade Show and Convention. Contact OCMA (614) 221-8600.

May 19-20

Regional Seminar with Frank "The Crank" and StarTech Journal, Betson Pacific, San Francisco, Calif. Contact Frank Seninsky, (201) 287-4990 or Jim Calore (609) 662-1080.

June 7-9

Wisconsin Amusement and Music Operators Association (WAMO) Spring Convention and Trade Show, Holiday Inn, Stevens Point, Wis. Contact WAMO (414) 529-4704.

June 15-17

Illinois Coin Machine Operators Association (ICMOA) Annual Meeting, Findley, Ill. Contact Ellen Donovan (708) 369-2406.

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Singin' the Top 40 blues

One of my final tasks before wrapping up another issue is typing in the latest Billboard charts for singles and CDs. We make this information available to jukebox operators, who might be interested in which songs/discs are garnering the most attention from radio, retail stores, and one-stops.

More often than not, I complete this task without paying particular attention to the artists and song titles. After all, the process is essentially rote; copying this information requires almost zero brainpower. (I know, I know. "That's all the brainpower you ever have, Caire," you snicker.)

Anyway, as I was finishing up the February charts, I decided to take a closer look at America's favorites. *My God, what's happened?* Commercial radio was once the domain of The Beatles, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Simon and Garfunkel, Elton John, Stevie Wonder—artists that could be playful yet serious and socially conscious when necessary. In short, quality music had a place within Top 40 pop.

What do we have in today's Top 10? Let's see, there's "Rhythm Nation" by Janet Jackson at #4, "Pump Up The Jam" by Technotronic at #7, "Just Like Jesse James" by Miss Tatooed Butt herself, Cher, at #8, and "Living In Sin" by Bon Jovi at #10. Pretty awe-inspiring, huh?

That's just the tip of the iceberg. Such goofy genres as rap and heavy metal have, inexplicably, representation on the charts. How about (c)rap like "Bust A Move" or, my favorite, "Me So Horny"? There's also heavy metal bombast from Tesla with "Love Song" (can you believe *that* emotion from a heavy metal band?) and Alice Cooper's hum-along ditty, "Poison."

Jukebox operators need to keep in mind that it's the age group composed of teenagers—a powerful record-buying block—which pushes these records to this level of popularity. As I said before, we present Billboard information to operators as a *gauge* of what's hot on the *pop* chart. It's simply more information to help make purchasing decisions. This doesn't necessarily mean that they should rush out and buy these 45s and CDs for their jukeboxes (unless the location's patrons are barely of legal age).

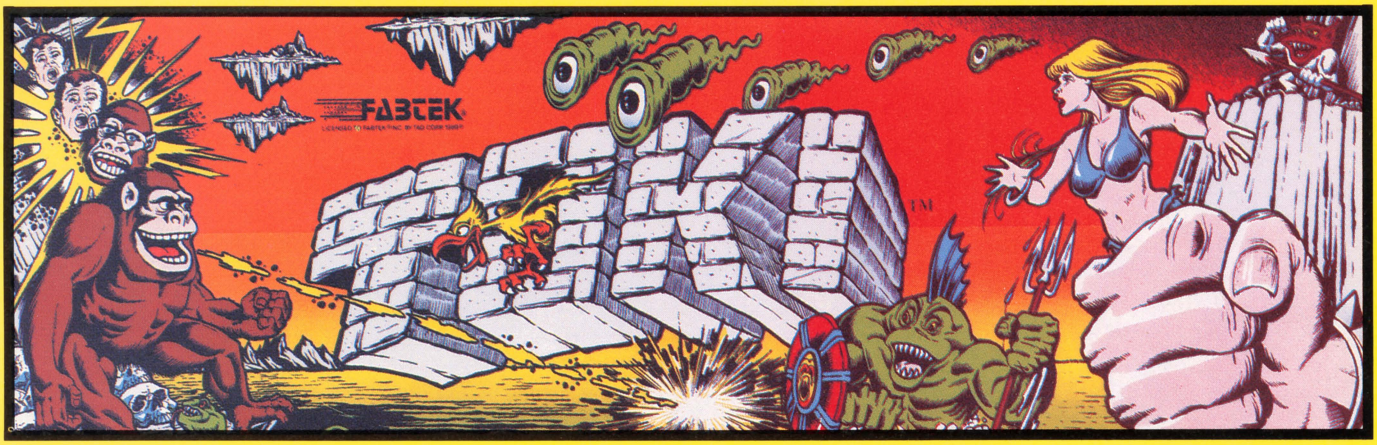
Operators need to make themselves more aware of artists popular with "the college crowd." I don't mean avant-garde groups like Depeche Mode or no-taste wonders like The Dead Kennedys. I'm referring to acts like R.E.M., Fine Young Cannibals, UB40, Living Colour, The Cure, etc. These bands have a strong following among the more well-informed listening/buying public. Including some of their CDs on a CD jukebox (not 45s, since most of these artists don't have many or any high-placing singles) would be a smart move for operators with upscale or college-age locations.

As Rowe International's Michael Reinert pointed out to operators at an AMOA '89 seminar, "Consider yourselves 'mini radio stations' that you serve as programmers for. Act as an educator for your locations. Work with them to bring out new artists that they may not have considered before."

The buzzword, then, is "balance." Make some concessions to what's popular on commercial radio, but balance it with artists that appeal to the non-conformist segment of jukebox players. Balance a barrage of synthesized drums with a host of acoustic guitars. Balance guttural yelping that passes for singing with discernible lyrics that mean something. A balanced jukebox diet means a healthy jukebox operator. □

Christopher Caire

Christopher Caire
News Editor



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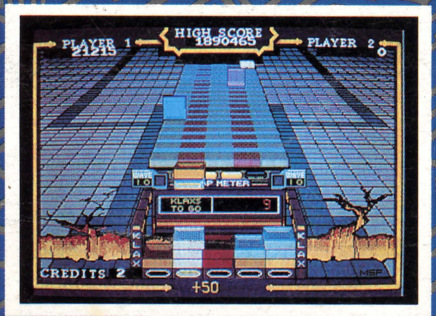
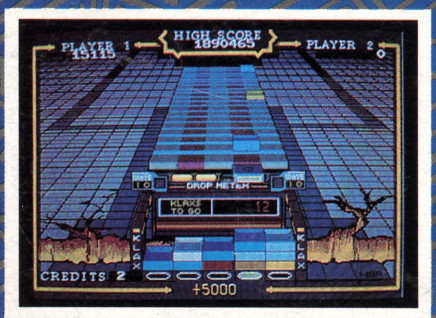
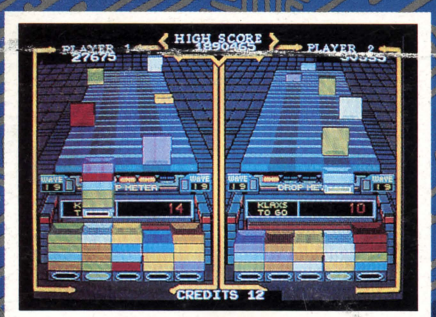


Make a basic KLAX by stacking three high.



Here, three blue tiles create a diagonal KLAX.



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